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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## GROUP TECHNIQUES APPLIED TO SPEECH PROBLEMS IN A UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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IT is curious that the training of the voice, whether we call the process elocution, speech training or voice production, has so often been regarded as a series of lessons concerning exclusively a teacher and an individual pupil, possibly with an examination in view. Yet speech is a social necessity; it arises only in social situations and must always involve at least a two-way relationship.

For the speech therapist in a teachers' training department, this social aspect of speech is particularly important. He does not exist solely to correct regional accents, to teach students how to breathe, how to articulate and how to phrase and pitch their sentences. Certainly these are among his objectives, but his primary one should be to help his students to acquire confidence in their own power to communicate ideas verbally, so that they can stand before their classes as live personalities, establishing real contacts with their pupils.

When a student faces a class for the first time, he may find that his voice lets him down. He is perhaps nervous. To children he may appear weak and hesitant, immature, eminently gullible. Or in an attempt to overcome his nervousness he may adopt a threatening attitude towards his pupils, who quickly react by becoming what he has taken them to be—his enemies. These attitudes find echoes in voices. Some teachers have special voices for the classroom; they regard children as a race apart—creatures to be hectorated and bullied, patronized, coaxed or even fled from. And so, when we set out to train a student to use his voice effectively, it is far more than vowels and consonants that we listen for. We may have to examine his underlying attitudes and create conditions in which he can discuss these freely and openly, not only with us but also with other students. If we are to be success-

ful in this, an understanding of the psychological forces at work in the group is at least as necessary to us as a technical knowledge of the physiological and linguistic bases of speech.

In studying how to handle speech problems we should do well to bear in mind what has been going on in other fields during the past thirty years.<sup>1</sup> Particularly relevant to this study are: the work of S. R. Slavson with maladjusted persons,<sup>2</sup> the investigations into the dynamics of group relations carried out by Kurt Lewin and his successors<sup>3</sup> and the sociometric and psychodramatic techniques invented and practised by J. L. Moreno.<sup>4</sup> For those training teachers, as for psychiatrists, the method of private instruction or private interview has only a limited efficacy. It is time that the therapeutic and aesthetic value of the group approach was better understood.

The speech therapist in a training department may find, like Slavson, Lewin and others, that the creation of satisfactory group conditions is one of his most important functions. As a leader he must be neither dogmatic nor weak. He must help his students to study their own voices in relation to the rôle they will have to play as teachers, but in criticizing he should tread warily, for the problem of speech is a very delicate one. No possession is more personal than one's own voice and no criticism arouses more bitter resentment than criticism of speech habits; the therapist who begins by setting up arbitrary standards may succeed only in alienating his students and disbanding his groups before they have had time to develop any permanent relationships. On the other hand, once a group has acquired social cohesion its members will combine friendly tolerance with honest criticism in a most refreshing way. All kinds of problems will in time find their way into such discussions—why a



Yorkshireman and a Welshman, although they have certain vowel pronunciations in common, sound so different, what speech habits are peculiar to Bradford or Leeds or Sheffield and not common to all Yorkshire towns, why a sentence sounds aggressive with one intonation and conciliatory with another, whether recording a reading is more, or less, embarrassing than recording an impromptu talk, what changes of pitch, speed and intonation are caused by such nervousness, how emotional strain of one kind or another affects a teacher's voice in the classroom.

It is often difficult for a student to understand why his voice bores, irritates or actively antagonizes a class. A discussion based on an actual lesson can be of far more value than a merely intellectual argument, as any demonstration lesson, if it is openly and honestly criticized afterwards, will show. It is not easy to arrange for even small groups of students to watch one another's lessons in schools. It is, however, comparatively simple to arrange for a group of students to teach each other in a university classroom, one student playing the rôle of the teacher while the rest act as his pupils. This rôle-playing device, based on Moreno's psychodramatic and sociodramatic techniques,<sup>4</sup> has been adapted to many needs. From 1942 the War Office Selection Boards used it, in preference to the private interview, for testing groups of men for potential leadership abilities<sup>5</sup> and certain industrial companies now use it in courses for the training of foremen.<sup>6</sup> It may prove a valuable aid in the training of teachers, for is it not one of the perennial complaints voiced by students that the theory of education is too widely divorced from its practice?

Students come to our training colleges and departments straight from the sixth forms of grammar schools or from university departments, where the emphasis is academic rather than practical. The scholar must turn teacher, and the transition is seldom easy. The student feels that his lesson is going to be interesting; but the children do not listen to it. He is sent to the speech therapist, who may well find himself working in a vacuum if he treats the speech difficulty in isolation and not in relation to the teacher's function in the classroom. The student's problem may derive from his feelings about himself and his class. No amount of drill in vowels

and consonants, no amount of practice in deep breathing, no amount of reading from texts is going to help such a student. What he needs is a chance to try himself out as a teacher with pupils who are sympathetic both to his needs and to their own. A group of students, acting as such a class, will very quickly take on the rôles of children, and in the psychodrama of the mock lesson will react to the teacher's voice, personality and method of instructing, very much as children might, especially if they are carefully briefed beforehand. In using this technique it is important that no-one steps out of his rôle. If the student who is playing the rôle of the teacher suddenly turns to the therapist with the explanation: 'At this point I should ask the class questions about the facts I had just given them', he throws away all the advantages of the dramatic method. He must ask his questions as he really would in the classroom, and, what is more important, he must handle the replies the 'children' give him just as if they really were children and not his fellow students. Though the situations thus created are modified by many factors other than the student's voice, it is nevertheless demonstrably true that friction is often caused by an aggressive manner of speech as much as by any other defect.

The following lesson, in which about ten science students participated, illustrated this kind of dynamic classroom situation. The student who played the rôle of the teacher was a mathematician whose lessons savoured rather of the drill yard and whose motto was 'Discipline at all costs'. He spoke in a hard, metallic fashion and, though at heart a kindly man who liked children, he always conveyed the impression of being determined to give no quarter. Jokes seldom enlivened his lessons, and when they did they tended towards sarcasm at someone's expense. He began the lesson by announcing that he was going to do some quick revision of the circle before going on to anything new. Having drawn a circle on the blackboard, he drew a triangle inside it, producing one side so that the extension from the triangle lay outside the circle. The following series of questions and answers was then recorded. (The 'teacher' is designated as Mr. X and the names of the 'pupils' are fictitious.)

Mr. X: Can anyone tell me anything about these two angles here? Can you, Smith?

Smith: They're equal.

Mr. X (startled): Are they equal?



Smith: Well, they look it Sir.

Mr. X: So they look it! What do you think, Hobson?

Do you think they're equal?

Hobson: They might be.

Mr. X: They might be—yes. Lawson, anything to suggest at all? Do you think they might be equal?

Lawson: They might be.

Mr. X: Did anyone suggest to anyone that they would be equal? Matthews? Back to the old question again!

Matthews: No, Sir.

Mr. X: They didn't?

Matthews: No, Sir.

Mr. X: Well, shall we just draw another diagram?

Several: Yes, Sir.

(While Mr. X is drawing this second diagram on the board a whisper, unheard by him, is distinctly recorded on the tape: 'Bit out of sorts this morning!')

Mr. X: Now then, do those two angles look equal?

Burton (soothingly): No, Sir, they don't look equal, Sir.

Mr. X: You're all satisfied that they don't look equal?

Lawson: You've marked them equal, Sir!

Mr. X (on the defensive): I've marked them equal, have I?

Lawson (indignantly): Yes, Sir!

Mr. X: I'm only talking about those two angles, you know. If you don't like that we'll have a look at that, shall we? (drawing another figure). Eh? Those two angles are—what, Thompson? What can you tell me about those?

Thompson: They're less than 180 degrees.

Mr. X: Each one?

Thompson: Yes.

Mr. X: Also—Burton?

Burton: The sum is less than 180 degrees.

Mr. X: Yes, and there's something else I'm trying to get.

Burton: They're acute.

Mr. X (irritably): No! No! What's this, Brown?

Brown: I think it's obtuse.

Mr. X: Yes, this is obtuse. One's acute and one's obtuse. Therefore—what, Burton? Quicker this time! You're all going to sleep!

(Several members of the class snigger.)

Mr. X: Anything to say? Are they equal?

(Uproar)

Mr. X: All right, they're not equal, are they?

The lesson continued in this fashion for a while and the recording was then played back and discussed. 'Mr. X', who was at a loss to know why his lesson had been so badly received and why his class had been so slow to answer, was astonished to discover how aggressive he sounded and protested that he had not felt quarrelsome. Yet he had in the space of a few minutes aroused hostility in pupils who had approached his lesson with sympathy and a good deal of tact—witness Burton's reassuring 'No, Sir, they don't look equal, Sir!' Somehow his honest endeavour to ensure that every member of the class was following his arguments closely had ended in mutual irritation and unveiled hostility. Such miscarriage of good intentions is not uncommon

in the classroom. Practice situations of the kind described above may help both the over-aggressive teacher who antagonizes his classes and the over-diffident teacher who fails to make any positive impression at all.

The student who lacks confidence, if he appeals to the speech therapist for help and advice, is likely to do so in private rather than as a member of a group. Being as diffident with his fellow students as he is with his pupils he shuns the self-revelation of the speech therapy group. Yet if he can be persuaded to study with others he can be helped more effectively and may indeed find that his fellow students share many of his own fears and disabilities. One such student, a science graduate, who had been told that he sounded nervous and that he failed to establish any real personal contact with his classes, came to me for private coaching and asked if he might hear his voice recorded. I asked him to imagine that he was explaining to a class of eleven-year-old boys the precautions that must be taken when a large number of people are working together in a chemistry laboratory. His first attempt was a monologue, stilted, remote and impersonal. When he heard it played back he admitted that he himself, if he had been one of the boys in the class, would have taken in very little of what he was being told, and that his attention would have been caught by the apparatus, the cupboards and the general paraphernalia of his new surroundings far more than by the teacher's dull monotone. The second recording took the form of a dialogue, in which I played the rôles of two or three boys in the class and supplied a constant stream of interruptions. This was far more successful, for as the student tried to relate his instructions to the various objects round the imaginary laboratory and to the spontaneous questions and comments that came up in the minds of the imaginary boys, so his manner warmed up and his speech acquired more vitality. The classroom situation could, of course, have been more closely approached if, besides myself, a group of students had been present to act as the class. As it was, I probably achieved more by acting with the student than I should have done by remaining outside the situation and merely offering comment and criticism afterwards.

On another occasion a geography specialist, who had been warned that the tempo of his lessons



was too slow, presented himself for private tuition and made a recording of an impromptu talk on cloud formations—a topic he had recently used in a lesson during his teaching practice. When this recording was played back to him, he himself commented on the notes of uncertainty and hesitation in his voice, but excused himself on the grounds that if he had actually been teaching a class the lesson might have been better, as he would have interrupted the monologue to ask questions, so that the pupils would have been co-operating with him rather than merely listening. What this student was unconsciously criticizing was that very isolation which he himself had sought when he had asked if he might record his voice in private. If other students had been present for this recording they could not only have created for him a classroom situation more closely resembling the real one, but in so doing they might have helped him to relax so that his rather stilted lecturing could have turned into something more like real teaching.

It may be argued that this psychodramatic technique cannot, in this particular field of voice training, take us beyond the stage of diagnosis. It is easy to discover the student's faults by setting him to teach the rest of the group, but not perhaps so easy to provide the necessary therapy by this method. To some extent this may be true. Though some students are able to correct faults during the actual recording of the mock lesson and can note afterwards, when they listen to the recording, the effects of their own changes of attitude (and hence of vocal tone), for many this quick adjustment is not easy. A man who habitually uses a timid, hesitant voice, both in the classroom and outside it, may not be aware of his own vocal potentialities, though painfully aware of his limitations. It is possible, with the help of other students, to use ready-made dramatic material in such a way that he can be trained to play a rôle which he believes to be foreign to his nature. In this kind of work we are really using Moreno's rôle-playing technique, though unlike him we are making use of literary material rather than relying on impromptu dialogue. There is an advantage in this. Even the least imaginative student warms to a worthwhile script, and may undertake to read a part in a play whereas he might shrink from the ordeal of improvising his own dialogue. Moreover, the printed words provide us with a

common object of study, and attention is thus focussed less on the student's shortcomings than on the claims of the ideas and feelings he is trying to interpret. The voice is studied in relation to significant words; the examination of the literary text proceeds side by side with the vocal re-creation of the text. Dramatic material can be found which is not only intrinsically interesting and worth serious study, but which also involves interpersonal problems similar to those found in schools.

An admirable example of this kind of scene occurs in John Drinkwater's chronicle play *Abraham Lincoln*, in the dramatic clash between the President and certain of his ministers, in particular Hook, the fictitious character in the play who is intended to typify the malicious, self-seeking elements in Lincoln's Cabinet. The scene involves a disciplinary problem, on a very much higher level than any found in a classroom, but still comparable. Lincoln remains throughout this scene calm, though not unmoved, desiring, though not dependent on, the support of his Ministers, true to his high principles and immovable in his resolution. The point at issue is the proclamation which is to announce the abolition of slavery, believed sincerely by some to be premature and used by Hook as a means of stirring up dissension in the Cabinet. At the close of the meeting Lincoln detains Hook; a dialogue follows in the course of which Hook is forced to reveal his hand and, after a series of ineffective attacks on the President's policy, he blurts out his resignation, which Lincoln ultimately accepts. I have worked through this scene with a number of students, always with similar results. A student playing the rôle first of Hook and then of Lincoln learns that authority founded on firm principles never blusters, whereas insecurity disturbs the speech mechanism just as it shakes the mental equilibrium. Lincoln's voice is quiet, steady, assured, with an occasional ring of anger that is effective just because it is rarely heard; Hook's voice is strident, aggressive, uncontrolled, reflecting a callous, self-seeking, unprincipled nature. Such an exercise is not only effective as voice training but is at the same time aesthetically satisfying and socially educative. This kind of dramatic work should be planned in such a way that each student has, from time to time, an opportunity to play a rôle which will strengthen the weak points in his



armour. If he is diffident he should be asked to play an aggressive rôle; if he is over-emphatic or unsympathetic he should be given a gentle part; if his manner in the classroom is heavy and taciturn he may be cast as a humorist and persuaded to talk in a lighter vein.

The success of this kind of work is almost entirely dependent on what Lewin calls the 'social climate' of the group, and this climate is determined largely by two factors—the principle on which the study groups are constructed in the first place, and the kind of leadership exercised by the therapist when the groups set to work. Moreno, the inventor of psychodrama, has, over a period of about thirty years, demonstrated how important it is that those in authority over children and young people should take into consideration the natural friendships and hostilities existing between them when they allocate them to groups which are to have any degree of permanence.<sup>7</sup> Interpersonal relationships play an equally important part in adult life. Since much of the speech work in training departments is voluntary, it seems reasonable to suggest that the students attending such classes should have some voice in deciding which groups they are to join. The more congenial the group, the more quickly will mutual tolerance and trust grow, and it is only in these conditions of relaxation that really effective speech therapy can be carried out. The wall between speech training and such recreational activities as debating, acting, play-reading and choral verse-speaking is very thin. Each of these can play a valuable part in the work of therapy, yet none is possible except in a group setting.

The speech therapist, faced with the problem of tackling eighty or so individual students, and obliged against his will to combine them into classes, may find, as Dr. Pratt of Boston did in the medical field, that the policy of despair proves to be the policy of hope, and that he can achieve more with his groups than he could with private pupils. Gradually, as the year goes on, these classes can become cohesive social units, in which both the problems common to the group and those specific to individual members can be more and more freely discussed. Students in a group of this kind are usually perturbed by any suggestion that they should disband and join other classes. They have learned to know each other; they understand one another's weaknesses;

they have established certain ties of relationship which they would not wish to see broken. It is this social cohesion, as much as anything the therapist can do, which makes it possible for a student to understand better both his classroom problems and more particularly, his very personal problems of voice quality and speech habits. This advance in understanding, though imperceptible to the therapist himself, may occasionally be noted by a supervisor who has observed the student's teaching performances both at the very beginning and at the very end of his training period.

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- <sup>1</sup> See summary in Cottrell, L. S., and Gallagher, R., 'Developments in Social Psychiatry', *Sociometry Monograph, No. 1*, New York: Beacon House, 1941.
  - <sup>2</sup> Slavson, S. R., *An Introduction to Group Therapy*. New York: The Commonwealth Fund. 1943.  
*The Practice of Group Therapy*. London: The Pushkin Press. 1947.  
*Analytic Group Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1950.
  - <sup>3</sup> Lewin, K., Lippitt, R., and White, R. K., 'Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally created "Social Climates"', *Journal of Social Psychology*, X. 1939.  
See also Lippitt, K., and White, R. K., 'An Experimental Study of Leadership and Group Life' in Newcomb, T. M., and Hartley, E. L. (eds.), *Readings in Social Psychology*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1947; and 'The "Social Climate" of Children's Groups' in Barker, R., Kounin, J., and Wright, H. (eds.), *Child Development and Behavior*. New York: McGraw Hill Book Co. 1943.
  - <sup>4</sup> Moreno, J. L., *Psychodrama: First Volume*. New York: Beacon Hill. 1946.  
'The Philosophy of the Moment and the Spontaneity Theater', *Sociometry IV*, No. 2. 1941.
  - <sup>5</sup> Harris, H., *The Group Approach to Leadership Testing*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1949.
  - <sup>6</sup> Bridger, H., and Isdell-Carpenter, R., 'Selection of Management Trainees' in *Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management*, November-December 1947.  
Bavelas, A., 'Role-playing and Management Training'. *Sociatry*, 1947 (i).  
Maier, N. R. F., and Zerfoss, L. F., M.R.P., 'A Technique for Training Large Groups of Supervisors and its Potential Use in Social Research'. *Human Relations*, Vol. V, No. 2.
  - <sup>7</sup> Moreno, J. L., *Who shall Survive?* New York: Beacon House. 1950. (Revised edition.)  
See also (for an account of the use of these techniques in an English school) Richardson, J. E., 'Classification by Friendship: Sociometric Techniques Applied to the Teaching of English' in Fleming, C. M. (ed.), *Studies in the Social Psychology of Adolescence*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1951.



# AUTHORITY IN EDUCATION

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IN his recent book, *Freedom and Authority in Education*,<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. H. Bantock has put forward some fundamental criticisms of the theory and practice of the 'progressive' movement in education. By 'progressive' education he does not refer only to the few schools initiated and supported by the well-off, middle-class intellectuals of the 1920's (their mistakes have often been condemned) but extends his objections to most of the current interpretations of 'self-expression' and 'group activity' wherever they are to be found, and indeed to the whole concept of democratic social relations in school life. He explores the grounds for a 'reassertion of the notion of authority' which he maintains modern educationists have rejected, and asks the important question 'What, then, is the significance, purpose and function of authority in education?'

No serious minded educators question the need for more rigorous thinking about education, for a more careful definition of terms and a re-examination of the current clichés and slogans of the superficial theorist. There is undoubtedly too great a tendency to forget the ends of education and to concentrate on the means. For example the free development of personality is not sufficient as an end in itself, and egocentricity is one of the progressive person's chief failings. It is even a weakness in the training of teachers in England that the colleges and universities often fail to secure an adequate discussion of the first principles in education. Therefore Mr. Bantock is right to remind us that we should be guided by ends which are beyond our immediate individual and social purposes, and that we should seek a conception of authority through which man can best achieve his true freedom.

There are, nevertheless, many educators who would disagree with Mr. Bantock over the way he would apply his notion of authority in the day-to-day work of the school, and who would defend the modern methods which he condemns.

First with regard to the use of authority in the learning process. According to Mr. Bantock 'the authority of the subject' means that the learner must be prepared to accept his ignorance, and submit to the superior knowledge of the teacher, who is a representative of a discipline and tradi-

tion of learning beyond himself. Indeed the teacher's highest aim should be to impart knowledge as an end in itself, and as a result he must constantly decide for the child, who does not know what he wants. Nor can the child (says Mr. Bantock) usually understand the nature of what he is learning or the reasons for it. The 'teacher's encouragement can, in many spheres, be nothing but dogmatic and authoritarian.' Any attempt to base his teaching on the interest or experience of the pupil is to introduce 'extraneous considerations', even when these serve a useful purpose. When, in another context, Mr. Bantock speaks of 'the serious decline of spanking among middle-class parents,' and refers to self-expression as 'a dishonest farce' one begins to understand why he does not think the teacher-child relationship can be a personal or friendly one.

Those who defend the methods involving more individual freedom and activity in the classroom would maintain that their purpose is not to give value to mere spontaneity, impulse and passing emotion, but to develop the habits of independent thinking, initiative and co-operative work. The child has to *learn* to use freedom and has to *learn* to exercise choice, and he can only learn these things by having the opportunity to think for himself and choose for himself without perpetual interference from the teacher. To say that the child is faced with the continual necessity of choice is to make a caricature of progressive education. Freedom, like discipline, can only be learnt gradually and must come in stages. Freedom cannot be held back until discipline is fully established, since discipline also is learnt step by step in the course of experience. It is true and self-evident that the child must accept *some* authority in order to *start* learning, and such prior acceptance on the child's part can always be assumed unless he has learnt to distrust adults altogether. Once learning begins, the willingness to continue depends on the success of the prior experience and the kind of expectation which proceeding to the next step arouses in the pupil. It is useless, in the practice of teaching, to hold the abstract ideal of the authority of the subject representing something beyond individual and social purposes, without first considering the everyday motives of the learner.

<sup>1</sup> Faber & Faber, 18s.; reviewed in *The New Era*, November, 1952.



The good modern teacher is able to work *with* his class rather than *against* it. He is in a position of authority, as he must inevitably be, but he does not use his power over his pupils to dominate them. He consults the pupils about their work and considers their wishes, rather than making all the decisions for them. He invites participation and encourages initiative, rather than giving orders on what must be done. Like a good leader he praises rather than blames, and can foster a happy, creative atmosphere instead of causing conflict and inciting opposition. Such a teacher anticipates interest and expects friendly co-operation; accepting the child, whenever possible, as a partner in the enterprise of learning. It is not the intention of these methods that less work should be done but more, since children can carry out just as hard work on their own initiative as under direct compulsion from the adult.

Problems in the use of authority are also involved in the social life of a school community. The school is not merely a place of learning but is a society of a certain kind. That the school is not the same kind of society as the adult world outside will be readily agreed, but part of its function is to prepare children for membership of that society. Now Mr. Bantock thinks that learning is the most important objective of the school, and questions whether such political notions as democracy are relevant to the sort of society a school is. This leads him to imagine that children might suffer from 'egotistical self-inflation' if they were asked to exercise the responsibility involved in serving on a school council. But he is so very suspicious of all social aims in education that one almost comes to think he regrets the need to live in society at all!

Democracy is not just a method of governing an adult society, but it is a way of life which is characterized by the kind and quality of the personal relations between any human beings. The democratic use of authority involves the sharing of power and influence by the methods of delegation and consultation. There seems no reason why these methods should not be applied, in a suitable form, in a school which is preparing children to have the right attitude towards authority. Social responsibility is one of the chief qualities needed in a democrat, and this has to be learnt slowly like the use of freedom. Social responsibility at the child's level means having a rôle to play in his community.

The actual machinery of self-government is relatively unimportant compared with the kind of way teachers and children behave towards each other, which is the real test of democratic relations. The child is not always right, but the child's opinion matters and he should be consulted about things which concern him. Discussion of the rules makes them more likely to be obeyed, and good discipline means accepting the law rather than living in fear of punishment.

Mr. Bantock makes it clear in his book what he is against, but it is not so easy to discover what he is for, particularly over the application of his views to practical teaching. He believes in the authority of the teacher, and in the supremacy of intellectual education and the training of the mind. He appears to believe in a conception of culture which is necessarily for the few, and regards the objective of equal opportunity in education with some suspicion. These views can be related to his opposition to planning, to group activity, to personal relations between teacher and taught, and to political egalitarian ideas. It would be fatally easy, holding these views, to behave like an autocrat in the classroom.

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# EDUCATION AND CONFORMITY

*Adam Curle, Professor of Education and Psychology, University College of the South-West, Exeter*

PRIMITIVE peoples have few educational problems. All that they require of their children is that they shall conform to the pattern of behaviour and belief which maintains the unchanging character of the community, and the whole weight of tribal authority is directed towards producing attitudes which will uphold and perpetuate that authority. The indoctrination is usually successful, because the individual has no other model to turn to or to learn from. In the few cases where it is unsuccessful it makes little difference, for the person concerned is ostracized or put to death before his disruptive influence can be felt. Since the main end of primitive education (if one can so call such an unformalized process) is to maintain the social *status quo*, the qualities which are inculcated are inseparable from their actual social use. Courage, for example, will not be thought of as a general property, but as a specific attribute of the warrior.

With us the issue is very different. While our traditional outlook in education allows that there must always be some process of teaching essential social skills, it emphasizes that the possession and the employment of these skills are two separate things. (We consider, for instance, that bravery in battle is only one aspect of a man's courage.) Our education in fact has the task of equipping us and then preparing us to use our equipment wisely, and independently of any rigid pattern of action; or as Hocking put it, to attain and then to transcend the cultural type.

There are reasons why a development which is not a mere perfection of normality, but which escapes the limitations implied by normality, is socially necessary as well as theoretically and ideally desirable. Firstly, our society has no longer the internal consistency of a primitive community. It makes conflicting demands on us, calling now for independence, now for submissiveness, now for co-operation, now for competition, which cannot be fitted into a single ideology except by a severe curtailment of our activity and a marked failure to use the opportunities of our civilization. A second equally cogent reason is that we live in a rapidly changing society in which any attempt to fix the pattern of behaviour would be disastrous to the values most important

to us. (It may be remarked that it was precisely a fixing of the pattern which was attempted in the late 1000-year Reich.)

It may be useful to enquire more deeply into what are known as 'norms' of behaviour. To quote from Sherif, 'norms arise from actual life situations as a consequence of the contact of people with one another. Yet, once formed, such norms regulate their relationships and daily life. It follows that the established norms will be stable to the extent that they eliminate intense friction in the contact of individuals or social classes, and to the degree that they do not stand as rigid barriers in the way of satisfaction of basic needs . . . In the initial state, norms may express the exact relationships demanded by the situation and may serve to regulate the lives of the individual members of the group, along co-operative lines with little friction. But once formed, they tend to persist. Many times they have outlived their usefulness.'

An illustration from the writer's own research will show how people who have become, as it were, fixed at what is the norm for their particular community may feel constantly frustrated. A married woman with four children was frequently upbraided by her husband because they were never able to go out together in the evening. Almost every day he would grumble because they could not go to the cinema or the public house. Eventually she explained that by the time she had given the children their supper, bathed them and put them to bed, had then given her husband his supper, eaten her own, washed up, and cut his sandwiches for the next day, it was too late to go anywhere. But, she added, if he would help her with the washing-up and various other small jobs, they might get finished in reasonable time. However, this sensible suggestion conflicted violently with what he considered to be his household rôle, and he was so enraged with his wife's 'impertinent' idea, that he threw a plate at her.

This is only one of a large number of examples of the way in which sticking to a strict pattern of behaviour prevents people from using the very facilities and possibilities which are most attractive to them.

How does it come about that people behave



in this self-depriving fashion? It appears that although certain habits of conformity may greatly limit our sphere of action, these very limits provide us with stability and predictability in our lives. They imply a possibly unconscious check on flexibility and adaptability, one might almost say on freedom, in the interest of emotional security. Our world is becoming rapidly more difficult to understand, not only on account of its material complexity, but because we have lost many of the moral and traditional rules of thumb by which our fathers assessed the values of life, and many people retract from the confusion and uncertainty into a rigidly irrational cast of thought.

If we are to meet this reactionary threat, education—using the term in the widest sense—must not only engage in the contest with outmoded and inappropriate norms of behaviour, but with the anxiety which impels people to cling to them. Its task must be to provide young people with the emotional as well as the intellectual equipment needed to transcend the type. Only thus can they be helped to catch up with, so to speak, and even to overtake and direct, the momentum of social change proceeding from technological and economic development.

Clearly this is a considerable task. There will always be pressure for education to 'fit young people for the world' in the narrower sense of training their skills and their outlook for some particular type of work or social position. The paradox is that the most realistic training is not training for anything in particular, but the nourishment of imagination, creative energy and adaptability. This type of education will always be unpopular with those who think of society in static terms, or who believe that its improvement lies in the perfection of what already exists. But a more particular danger lies in the fact that such education will easily arouse anxiety with the attendant peril of reaction, particularly among the emotionally immature or deprived. Consequently while destroying an emotional security based on conformity and stability, education—particularly the educational community of the school—must foster the other type of security which is based upon reciprocal responsibility and affection.

The school as a system of human relations is clearly in a position to exercise an enormous

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influence on how children use and value the actual learning it imparts. The wrong balance of authority can do much to sabotage independence. But an authority which is both protective and permissive may create an atmosphere in which the child is emboldened to break with crippling conformity. If in addition the permissiveness extends to an encouragement of service and responsibility, the final product may be the constructive servant of society, rather than its slave. His stability will be the outcome of the warm human relationships which he is free to

create, and not the result of passive acceptance of an inhibiting tradition.

But the questions of conformity, of teaching the techniques of social living rather than an ideology, of inculcating social conscience without making a fetish of social reform, raise a number of specialized problems in the almost uncharted field of the social psychology of education. If democracy depends for its survival on a population which is aware of its social and moral problems and is actively prepared to meet them, these studies must not be long delayed.

## THE NEW EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN BERLIN

*Albert Gosse*

[The revival of the New Education Fellowship in Germany has depended upon the work and experiments of those who were active between 1921 and 1933, and who never lost faith in their beliefs and principles. Herr Gosse has therefore, at our request, prefaced his article with a short account of his early career.]

As a young man I would have liked to be a teacher, but my mother had to support herself and her family by badly-paid work performed at home. So I became a ladies' hairdresser and very soon was able to support her from my wages. In 1913 I started my own business. With August 1914 a whole world fell in ruins around me. I had firmly believed in the power of international Labour; now that belief had been destroyed and I was forced to become a soldier. After 1918 I returned to my business, and in 1920 my son was born. This led me to take an interest in education.

An article brought me into touch with the Montessori movement, and I became a member of the German Montessori Society and then its Treasurer. Later on I began to take a regular part in the discussions at Parents' Meetings, and came to know the Community Schools that had been started along the lines advocated by the Berlin School Inspector, Paulsen, to one of which I sent my boy when he reached school age. Here and in the Montessori Kindergarten I learnt the value of co-operation between parents and school, and later I joined the progressive education society *Der Bund der entschiedenen Schulreformer*, in order to make propaganda for that idea. But Hitler put an end to all reforms in 1933, and we were compelled to watch as passive spectators while education was reduced to the status of a hand-maid of militarism.

In 1945 the way was at last free once more for reform. Soon old friends of the New Education came together. I sought contact with the Montessori Centre in London, and helped to get a Montessori Training Course started in Berlin. Then I heard of the Pestalozzi Children's Village at Trogen in Switzerland, which I was able to visit, and we managed to get the Berlin officials to agree to the foundation in a Berlin suburb of a similar village for our own homeless orphans, though the division of Berlin into East and West put an end to this effort.

Meanwhile, I was constantly in touch with parents and teachers over the problems of the New Education. I have often wondered why this became so important an element in my life. Perhaps it was because there is so much of the teacher in me. With the Hitler years and the war, the younger generation had lost its illusions and its ideals as well, and I felt that we owed them a debt in this time of crisis. For hundreds of years the German people had been educated for slavery: now they must learn democratic ways and we must help. We must show them how to educate and discipline themselves, how to acquire the art of brotherly kindness so that they may form a true community and become partners in the family of nations. It was but natural then that, when a friend of ours told us of the New Education Fellowship in London, we should get into touch with it and, after attending



the conference at Jugenheim in 1950, should join its newly revived German Section.

**I**N every quarter of the globe, the war took its toll in human lives and reduced to ruins towns and villages. Want and misery followed in its train. The schools were not exempt. In Berlin, after months of apathy and resignation, those who had 'come through' started to bring the educational system to life again. Out of what remained, machines and equipment were reconstructed, and dwelling places were made momentarily inhabitable. The rebuilding of the schools was also taken in hand, parents and teachers working side by side.

In a suburb of West Berlin a group of men and women met together during the winter of 1945-6 to discuss the question of the part played by the old authoritarian type of education in paving the way for dictatorship and war. For wars and dictatorships are not due solely to struggles for power, but presuppose, and have as their essential cause, men's minds and attitudes. These attitudes are formed in homes, at school, and in the streets. For centuries the German people have been trained to enjoy being ruled, and they have therefore willingly handed over all responsibility for the conduct of public affairs to the official and the sergeant-major! But if Germany is to qualify for equal rights among the democratic nations of Europe, democracy must become its normal form of life. This goal can only be achieved if education in home and school can be re-oriented to accord with the results of modern research in education and psychology. Success will come when all adults change their attitude to children and to education under the influence of these new conceptions. But to effect this we must talk simply as parents to parents and use easily understood phraseology, acting as interpreters of the scientist to ordinary people.

These ideas led us, on the 23rd October, 1946, to form a group of parents and teachers to work for the New Education: it appealed to all adults and adolescents to help change the old authoritarian school and make of it an active and democratic community. The next two years were devoted to enlisting supporters. These were the years of the coal shortage and of electricity cuts. Often we sat in unheated rooms, lit by candlelight, and talked with parents and adolescents about schools and education, asking

for criticisms and suggestions for educational reform. Many were the difficulties, but they could never shake our conviction that Germany's real recovery depended upon making her education democratic and humane.

The year 1948 brought with it a new Education Act, establishing a unified school system. The law was passed by a two-thirds majority in the Berlin Parliament and was then ratified by the Occupying Powers. In Section 18, the law declared: 'In all schools Parents' Committees shall be established, elected from the Parents' Groups of each class. Their object is to allow parents and guardians to play a responsible part in school life, thereby ensuring that close contact is maintained between the education given in the home and that provided at school.' This clause gave parents both the right and the duty of co-operating for the benefit of their children in the organization of school life. But the first election of parents' representatives aroused little interest, even among parents and teachers.

In larger meetings, therefore, our group made it a point to make all adults acquainted with the new law, and such themes as 'The New Education Act', 'Authority and Freedom in Education in Home and School', 'What is your Child's Attitude to School and Teacher?' were often the occasion of very lively debates. At one such meeting, a father stood up and said: 'For every other profession we require several years of training; but parents, important as they are as their children's educators, get none.' This complaint made us realize how deep was the need and how helpless parents feel in face of the many difficulties that arise in the home. This signal of distress led us to set up Parents' Centres where they could come for consultation and help, and to institute a library service to give them the aid of books. We also brought in specialists in psychology and education to give lectures, and sought help from films.

It may be as well here to give the reader some account of the nature of these meetings. In 1951 some thirty or so were held in different parts of Berlin. Those addressed by speakers from abroad, like Elisabeth Rotten, Miss Elms of the London University Institute of Education, Dr. Jensen of Norway, Dr. Bogelund of Denmark, and Professor Louis Fouilleron of France, were particularly well attended, drawing audiences of 200 or more. In 1952, finding how helpless parents



were when confronted by children's questions on sexual matters, we secured the help of a psychologist who used as a basis for discussion a film called *Human Growth*, which showed how a human body is formed, explaining it clearly to a class of 12 to 14-year-olds. This drew large audiences, and the awkwardness of parents was soon overcome when they realized that other parents felt as uncertain and as awkward as themselves. Often the film was as enlightening to them as to the children for whom it was intended!

Another film that parents found very valuable was entitled *How Children Are Influenced*. It showed the importance of what parents expect from their children. A mother wants to keep her son tied to her apron-strings and is worried by any tendency to independence, while his father wants him to be pushing and successful and thinks his performances at school and on the games field are never good enough; the result is a timorous and unbalanced adult, unhappy in his married life and in his job. But the film does not remain entirely critical, for it ends by giving an example of the way the boy might be better handled.

The Education Act of 1948 compelled us to take a stand in regard to the development of our school system. This Act introduced one type of school for all children up to 14, with a central compulsory curriculum core and optional courses to be followed or not according to the inclinations and abilities of the particular child. After 14 there was a division into two types of school—the grammar school, and a practical branch with technical school following it at 15. Education was free and compulsory up to the age of 18. Co-education and the free provision of textbooks and school materials were firmly established by the Act, which made religious instruction the task of the churches. The law was a compromise, agreed upon between the parties.

Soon after a remodelling of the schools had begun according to the Act, opposition arose in many quarters, so that when a new Parliament was elected in December 1950, with a new majority, it at once set about altering the law and issued a new regulation. We now have a common school up to 12 only, and after that schools divide into three branches—grammar, technical and practical.

Our group set itself to oppose the new regulation. In the interests of a really democratic

community, we thought it necessary to keep children of all classes working together in the same school. The law of 1948 had given every child an equal opportunity of developing all its capabilities. We deplored the reactionary tendencies already visible as the result of the new arrangement, since, owing to it, educational reform has now become an occasion for party strife. Yet, in spite of this unwished-for development, we are continuing to work for such a reform of the schools as shall create a democratic community, a real partnership between all sections of our people.

During recent months we have turned our attention to a new problem, that of juvenile unemployment. On the 1st April, 1952, there were more than 25,000 adolescents between 15 and 18 unemployed in West Berlin—25,000 young men and women with no jobs, no apprenticeship, depending upon the social services for their livelihood and tending, therefore, to look upon unemployment pay as the chief end in life! We believe that the community has a responsibility for these young people, and have attempted to point to a means by which it could be fulfilled. Though much is being done to try and meet the problem, it has all been organized on a temporary and makeshift basis. The New Education Group drew up a memorandum suggesting as a part solution that two apprentices should share every apprenticeship post in Berlin. Following the example of the *Co-operative Part-time Schools* in the U.S.A., these apprentices should take turn and turn about at their jobs and in the technical school, so that while one works the other studies. The arrangement would not only end adolescent unemployment (we have 30,000 apprenticeship posts in Berlin), but would also adapt education better to modern demands, which require workers with good technical knowledge and an acquaintance with the scientific principles underlying their jobs. Where this is impossible, we propose another year in the technical school to enable the adolescent to acquire a practical grounding in all the basic knowledge required by his trade. This training year should be completed by an examination, which would give the pupil a recognized status corresponding to his achievement. At the same time it could form a basis for a regular training and be reckoned as a part of his apprenticeship.

We sent these proposals to all officials, Trade



Unions, Industrial Associations and Chambers of Commerce, thereby giving rise to a discussion which is still going on and which will finally, we hope, lead to a practical realization of our scheme. In some such way adolescents may be drawn again into the active life of the community and feel that they have a purpose in life and that society cares for them.

This short account of what we have been attempting may give readers some idea of the

work and objects of the New Education Group in Berlin. We know that our aims can never finally be realized, since each generation must strive for them anew. For they are nothing less than the achievement, through education, of mutual understanding and respect and a real partnership between all men and all nations.

[We are indebted to Mr. Wyatt Rawson for the translation of this article from the German.—ED.]

## SHIP ADOPTION

S. E. Buckley.

THE work of the Ship Adoption Society will already be known to readers of *The New Era*. I had been generally acquainted with it since it first started and had always looked upon it as one of the many 'good ideas' that modern education somehow finds room for. It was only when I read *Seafarers, Ships, and Cargoes*,<sup>1</sup> however, that I was fired with the desire to see the working of the scheme at closer quarters.

Now, living as I do on the very threshold of the Drake family estate, within walking distance of Raleigh's birthplace, and within sight of the waters that saw the coming of the Armada, it would seem a very simple wish to satisfy. I decided to play fair, however, and so I set course for Bampton.

Bampton lies practically in the centre of Devon, almost equidistant from the Bristol and English Channels. Its Secondary Modern School is fortunate in its position, its delightful buildings, and its head master. Within five minutes of my entering the school I was hearing a great deal of interesting talk about the working of the scheme. I learnt, too, somewhat as a surprise, that ships and the sea were subjects almost outside the ken of the majority of the pupils of this Devon school. Yet I do not think I ought to have been surprised. Many of them rarely saw the sea; they belonged, almost exclusively, to a farming community, and their out-of-school activities and interests centred round the work of the farm. So there they were in the middle of a county which, if not sea-girt, was bounded by the sea on two sides, and yet they were almost completely cut off from first-hand knowledge or experience of it.

I found that the ship which they adopted some eighteen months earlier was an oil tanker running between the Persian Gulf and Shell-haven, with an occasional call at Rotterdam. Such a run might seem to have its limitations, and more of that later. The adoption was launched by a member of the staff, Mr. Bouquet. A few minutes' talk with him showed that he had the right qualities to make any such scheme go—enthusiasm, vision, persistence, a Cambridge history degree, and four years' war service in the Merchant Navy. So they got off to a good start. Ship adoption is no different from any other school activity in that way: given the guiding hand of someone who is really interested and sees its possibilities, it will yield good profits; allowed to run itself, it will die of stagnation.

How did they get to work? First of all, of course, the children wrote their letters to the ship. The patience and keenness of the captain amazed me. He wrote an account of his ship, where it was going, what it did. He sent photographs. He described the various members of the crew and what their work was. So stage two was reached, with different groups of pupils writing to various members of the ship's company. I saw some of the pupils' letters, and remarkably good they were. They talked naturally and easily about their daily life and work. I read the replies. Some of the best were from the steward boy who, in spite of his disclaimer that 'letter-writing was never one of my good subjects', wrote a breezy and informative letter, clear in every detail.

Then the guiding hand came in to get the best out of all this correspondence. Scrap-books, of course, were desirable, and these were well started with the captain's generous supply of photographs. A large map was put up and the

<sup>1</sup> *Seafarers, Ships and Cargoes* (ed. Leonard Brooks and R. H. Duce). University of London Press, 10/6. Reviewed by Mr. Buckley in *The New Era*, June 1951.



ship's course was followed. There was a study of climate and weather changes. Mr. Bouquet saw the enormous possibilities of bringing real life into the teaching of geography, of history—and of literature, too. Even a run to the Persian Gulf and back provided vast material for anyone with the vision to see how to use it. Dozens of mere names all at once became real places to these boys and girls in the heart of agricultural Devon, and a ship became something very much more than a shape which floats on the water.

I should say that, apart from the obvious enjoyment of the whole thing, the main benefits have been threefold. First there has been the very definite broadening of horizons. Point has been given to the sort of writing to which Secondary Modern people will largely be limited when they leave school—letter-writing. How much better, in any case, to write to the actual steward of *s.s. Capso* than to an imaginary aunt to thank her for a non-existent birthday present? And lessons in history and geography—and other subjects—have been lifted out of the academic to be given reality.

Were there any criticisms? Just a few—of

the constructive sort. Everything depends, of course, upon the enthusiasm and common sense of the person in charge of the scheme, combined with the imagination and patience of the ship's captain—for it must need a degree of tolerance for a man with a job to do to sit down and write pleasantly to school children he has never seen. It was felt that there could be arranged a system by which, after a ship on one particular run had been adopted for so long, a change could be made to another voyaging to a different part of the world. Matters of detail like this could easily be rearranged. There are captains who like the correspondence and are good at handling it; a few regard it as a bit of a nuisance. That is no blame to them—it is just a question of differing personalities. But it is important enough to warrant some attention from the organizers, for children are quick to spot when their attentions are merely being tolerated.

Such a lot of school activities are in danger of lacking definition, but this ship adoption seems to be soundly based on real happenings and people. No school, I feel, should omit at least to test its possibilities.

## AN EXPERIMENT IN TRAINING MALAYAN TEACHERS

*Dorothy J. Aickman, recently Superintendent of Teacher-Training Federation of Malaya*

ON Monday, 17th November, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, declared open a Training College at Kirkby, near Liverpool, which has been temporarily taken over by the Government of the Federation of Malaya for the training of teachers for its English schools. This experiment, which is likely to have far-reaching results in educational advance in Malaya, has now been officially blessed. It is an experiment, too, which may well help towards solving Malaya's great social problem, that of harmonious racial development.

The first group of 149 students arrived at Kirkby from Malaya in January 1952; the second arrived in September. Approximately 300 students are now installed, Malays, Chinese, Indians and Eurasians, women as well as men, drawn from all States and Settlements, a cross-section of the plural society which to-day exists in Malaya. Fifteen mature teachers, for

whom a special course has been devised, were included in the first group. On the completion of a two-year course of training, all will join the staffs of English schools throughout the Federation; schools, that is, for Malayan children, irrespective of race, where English is the medium of instruction. To-day there is an unprecedented demand for places in such schools. There, as trained teachers, they will be able to help promote further development in teaching method, particularly at Primary level, for the beginnings of progressive methods are already to be found in many Primary classrooms. They will thus become the nucleus of a body of teachers, aware of newer concepts in both training and teaching, and able, it is hoped, to apply these to local situations. Moreover, since there has been, so far, no college for the training of teachers in English schools in Malaya (the first, held up owing to the Emergency, is now in process of being

built), the experience of being part of a multi-racial student community, engaged in working out for itself, in the course of living, working and playing together, essentially democratic practices, should be of vital significance for the future of Malaya.

Both Mr. Lyttelton and Dr. Mountford, the latter Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University and Chairman of the Governing Body of the College, stressed such points at the Opening Ceremony. Mr. Lyttelton stated that in the immediate establishment of good relations between the races, the College had already provided a pattern for Malaya.

Messages were read from the Member for Education, Dato Thuraisingam, from General Templar, and from the Federal Director of Education. Finally, Mr. P. D. Rajadurai, a student from Kuala Lumpur and President of the Students' Union, expressed the thanks of the assembled students to Mr. Lyttelton in a singularly able speech.



# Book Reviews

**The Year Book of Education, 1952.** Editors : J. A. Lauwerys and N. Hans. Published in Association with the University of London Institute of Education. (Evans Brothers. 63/-).

The central theme of this volume of the Year Book is the reform and reconstruction of education in the past five or six years since the war. Each year since 1948 your reviewer has read, with reasonable thoroughness, each volume of the Year Book as it appeared. The present volume maintains the excellent standard of the previous ones, and, put together, these five large books provide a unique collection of reference data concerning the educational systems and developing ideas on education in all countries of the world. The reform of education is a form of social change, and its study requires a comparative sociological method, in addition to the other methods by which its changes can be surveyed and evaluated. This sociological approach is exemplified in the 1952 Year Book in a way which, perhaps, interprets the power and place of education under present world circumstances, better than could be achieved by any other approach. This is particularly well shown by the long first chapter written by the editors.

With a volume of this size it is impossible to review all the sections in detail. Of the eight sections the first is of a general nature and the others deal respectively with the British Isles, the English-speaking countries, Europe, the U.S.S.R., the Middle East, Asia, and the British Tropical Dependencies. With regard to accuracy of fact the reviewer must trust the distinguished contributors and the editors. It is perhaps most useful to report some of the general impressions which any reader is likely to receive, linked with the problems which these will raise in his mind. This will be attempted under three headings.

(1) *The reform of education depends on social forces.* The direction of change in a country is determined by forces which are partly economic and technological, and partly the result of political and philosophical ideas. As economic and political power is distributed in new and different ways, so new social groups begin to demand opportunities for the education which they conceive necessary for their function and status within their society. The conflicts which arise may be due to differences of political outlook and of social philosophy. In the western world such conflicts are typi-

fied by the articles representing contrasted Conservative and Socialist views in the United Kingdom, and the descriptions of the Progressive outlook and the alternative of the Liberal Arts and the 'Great Books' Programme in the United States. The conflicts, on a larger scale, may be due to the impact of an ideology foreign to our western world, but which has spread from the U.S.S.R. to the countries directly under her influence, and is gaining power throughout Asia and the East. In each case the arguments for the kind of education desired are based on a set of beliefs which the writer holds to be the best for his particular society and perhaps also as ideals of universal validity.

(2) *The meaning of reform differs widely throughout the world.* As a result of the dependence of educational change on the stage of material progress as well as on the prevailing climate of values, the concept and nature of educational reform will differ from one part of the world to another. In countries with complex industrial systems, where compulsory education for all is already well established, the social needs for more secondary, technical, or university education, with equality of access for all pupils of the necessary ability, are those which engage the reformers and administrators. In less advanced countries, as for example in most of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, where book-learning is only for the few, equal opportunity for education has little or no meaning. Here one of the greatest needs and most urgent problems is to achieve mere literacy and the beginnings of fundamental education for the masses, while at the same time preparing for the increasing development of machine production. Reforms are thus seen to be at different levels in different countries in the first place because of purely material considerations. In the second place different conceptions of the meaning of equal opportunity provide an example of how the internal structure of an educational system can depend on the prevailing theories of human nature. The comprehensive school of the U.S.S.R. and her near neighbours provides a uniform curriculum, usually to the age of 15, for children of all abilities and social backgrounds, on the theory that differences between children's abilities are predominantly, if not entirely, the result of material conditions and social environment. Equality of education therefore means the same education for all.

The comprehensive school, or *école unique*, where it exists in Great

Britain, Europe or the U.S.A., accepts a differentiation of post-primary education at some stage after 11 plus, and provides an academic stream and a choice of courses or elective subjects. Transfer from one stream to another is based on the theory that there are marked differences in ability and aptitude already existing in different children for which a suitable type of education should be provided at the right time for each child. This is not the whole story, for the comprehensive school is by no means common in Europe and it is still usual to find distinct types of education determined at an early age by wealth, or social class, or by examination or intelligence tests at a given stage of the child's life. All these selective mechanisms can be given theoretical justification by people who may also call themselves, in some respect, reformers or believers in progress. What is regarded as reform in some quarters may be regarded as a reactionary tendency in others.

(3) *What progress has been made?* After the second World War reforms in education were everywhere being projected and planned. We in this country are, perhaps, a little disappointed that so little has been achieved in practice in spite of the great promise on paper of the 1944 Act. Everywhere in Britain we find that shortages and expense are quoted as the obstacles to progress. This really means that the nation has not enough resources to give education priority while also rearming and maintaining our standard of living.

Solid progress, in quantity at least, has been made in the U.S.A. because they are wealthy enough. There is no country in the world where so many years per head of the population is spent on full-time education. They can afford to spend more time than we do on general education at school and college, and postpone intensive specialization until later.

Solid progress has also been made, from their point of view, in the U.S.S.R. because of their single-minded purpose through an enforced political unity, and their willingness to direct energy to a colossal reconstruction of their educational system.

Among the other industrial countries of the West great efforts have been made by France, but most of the European nations, except those under Communist control, seem tired or lacking in inspiration, or torn by political or religious quarrels.

In the less advanced countries, inhabited by two-thirds of mankind, we find vast illiterate masses, with little resources to found even primary



schools, and little hope of training the teachers they require. Given a long period of international peace a basic educational plan could succeed, and perhaps correct, to some extent, the growth of intense aggressive nationalism.

The spirit of democracy and respect for human personality are not widespread in the world, yet everywhere human beings are demanding social justice and a better way of life. It is not enough to be conscious of our own needs. If we want a safer world we must become conscious of the needs of others and help them where we can.

A. K. C. Ottaway

### Friedrich Froebel and English Education. Edited by Evelyn Lawrence. (University of London Press. 20/-).

Here is a Centenary Symposium which successfully avoids the merely 'reconnaissance' by assigning four of its five contributors tasks and titles explicitly concerned with 'today'. This is not to underestimate the value of the historical chapters nor to wish them away. Indeed they are particularly necessary for those of us whose special interests and occupations are in fields other than the primary. Nor is there any lack of evidence that each of the contributors was careful to keep vividly

aware of the views being expressed by the others and the total effect of the 'stock-taking'.

It is in the nature of the task that the longest contribution should be Miss Woodham-Smith's on *The History of the Froebel Movement in England*. Her preliminary chapter *The Origin of the Kindergarten* is a model of brevity, and together these two papers put the reader in possession of the necessary facts about Froebel and place his theories and achievement soundly in the perspective of the history of educational thought especially concerning the very young. His own early life has many clues to the sources both of his ideas and of his zeal for their application in precise detail as set out by him. For example, he records that throughout his life he was always seeking for hidden connections and an underlying unity in all things, and that he failed to find it in the piecemeal studies of school. From his *Autobiography* we learn that as early as 1800 when attending lectures at the University of Jena he could already 'perceive unity in diversity, the correlation of forces, the interconnection of all living things, life in matter, and the principles of physics and biology.'

In 1805 he began to teach at Frankfurt Model School under Herr Gruner, a pupil of Pestalozzi, the great Swiss

whose many novel beliefs included priorities for observing nature and using the hands over and before learning from books. He soon wrote to his brother, 'I felt as happy as the fish in the water, the bird in the air.' His weekly walks with his pupils developed from the study of botany to that of environmental studies in geography. By 1807 he had given up this appointment and was full-time tutor to three private pupils whom he took next year to Pestalozzi's institution at Yverdon. Although this period fired many of his purposes which later developed, at the close of his visit he felt 'the deficiency of inner unity and interdependence as well as of outward comprehensiveness and thoroughness in the teaching there.'

The entwined threads and single increasing purpose of Froebel's methods are in these chapters shown in developing detail far too important for synopsis. Many waters are seen to flow together into that stream which later came to be called *The New Education*. The fierce controversies between various bodies having their own special theories and methods are objectively described with notes on the work of Professor John Dewey of Chicago and his followers, of Dr. Maria Montessori, and of Rachel and Margaret MacMillan, as well as the vivid criticism of Professor Graham Wallas. After this it is good to read of a drawing together of so many different units when 'in 1929 the Froebel Society, the New Education Fellowship, the Nursery School Association and the Montessori Society joined in a conference with American teachers under the leadership of Professor Patty Smith Hill.' There is indeed 'a very direct connection between the work and ideas of Froebel more than a hundred years ago and the modern or progressive attitude towards children and their education.'

The second longest paper is that by Mr. Nathan Isaacs, O.B.E., on *Froebel's Educational Philosophy in 1952*. At the outset he states the general problem involved in assessing any educational philosophy—its direct and necessary origin in an ultimate philosophy. 'Froebel's principles and even his technical practices stemmed from his unique visionary total grasp and fervour regarding the fundamental nature of mankind and of all creation. For him the meaning and value of every part of his educational doctrines lay in that central faith; from this they all sprang, and this they were to provide with its living realization and fulfilment.' It is this continuity and singleness of his total view which constitute Froebel's greatest significance for Education in our time. However, our assessment of any educational philosophy is bound to be

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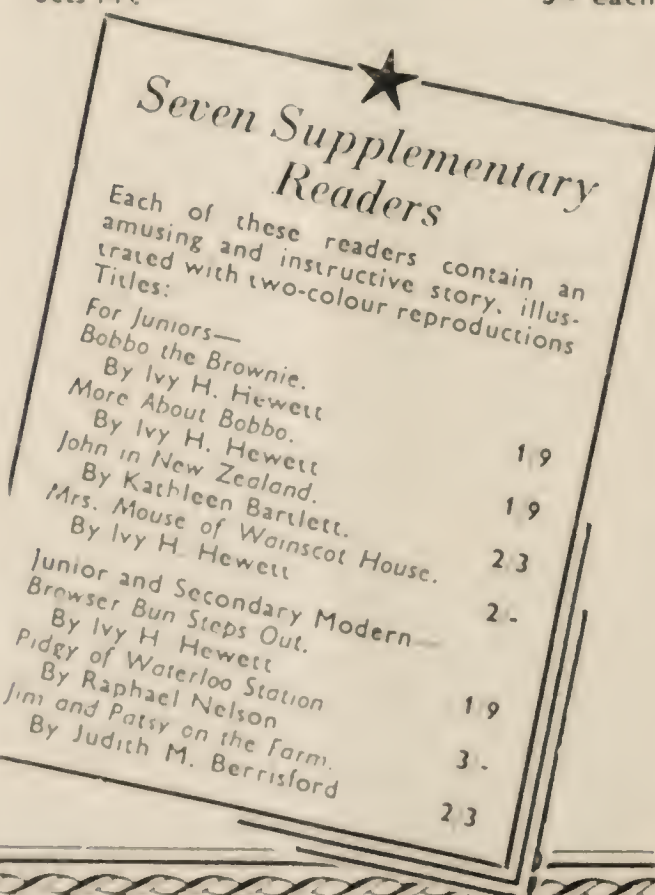
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coloured by our own. In the course of this paper will be found as useful a brief summary of the directions and findings of Child Study since 1900 as one has encountered anywhere. We are given Froebel and much more.

Neither is that summary inapt to the whole volume. Nor is there in the book anywhere a suggestion that its authors will resent its being studied for that reason. Rev. H. A. Hamilton, B.A., Principal of Westhill Training College, Selly Oak, writes of the *Religious Roots of Froebel's Philosophy*. His chapter agrees that the modern Christian may find Froebel's religion wanting in essentials of the Faith, for there was in it no reference to the Passion, the Resurrection, nor indeed to the Christmas Story. Yet for Froebel a school should be a community which functions in accord with those laws of love which are the nature of God. He was no advocate of dogma or didacticism but relied on his insight, however variable, rather than seeking any arbitrary consistency in setting forth a tidy system of thought. His own chequered childhood made him all the more fervent for that Love in the home which is the resultant of dependence and care, shared purpose, and mutual understanding. Evidence is not wanting in our time that there is all too often a serious falling away from this high concept of parental responsibility. Limited though it be, Froebel's version of Christ confirms the central position of Man in the scheme of things and asserts his kinship with God.

Without these two fundamentals Froebel's basic philosophy could not have supported the structure of his edifice of method. He added a Christian philosophy to Rousseau's philosophy of education. 'Every human being should be viewed and treated as a manifestation of the divine spirit in human form.' Froebel stressed the need of education for a purpose beyond itself to achieve a total unity in the child, in society and in the Divinity, but only with the last lies the ultimate purpose. In this synthesis we may in our time reconcile the complex, even contradictory, phenomena displayed to us and entangling our aims when we face the contemporary findings of the sociologist and the psychologist. 'The very fact that the problems are more complex and the tensions sometimes more unbearable than Froebel seems to have known drives us back on the need for a faith which is ultimately as simple as was his.'

Miss J. P. Slight, B.Sc., formerly adviser to Leeds and to Kesteven (Lincs.) Education Committee, refers the work in contemporary primary

schools back to its Froebelian origins, while Miss O. B. Priestman, B.A., undertakes the same assignment in regard to our Independent Preparatory Schools. One feels that the editorial guidance of Miss Evelyn Lawrence has been much more vital than the acknowledged text suggests. The whole work has just the attitude of quiet enthusiasm which characterizes her talks to teachers and others, and pervades the informal conversations in the course of which some of us came to know the real philosophies of Froebel for the first time. A careful reading of this well-ordered volume cannot fail to give even those who have made no previous special study of Froebel a broad view of and a deep insight into his teachings in the light of the increasing knowledge and understanding in the hundred years since his death.

Ernest L. Fereday

### **From Day to Day in the Infant School. F. Irene Serjeant. (Blackie. 8/6).**

So skilled a trainer of young teachers as Miss Serjeant, not only sound on the theory of education but also with wide experience of its right application to the education of young children, is bound to write most helpfully both for students and teachers. In *From Day to Day in the Infant School* this statement is fully justified.

The first two chapters give in simple language the findings both of psychologists and practical teachers on what children at that period of life need and how schools can supply the right types of environment and the conditions to make the hours spent therein fruitful and happy.

By far the larger part of the book is devoted to describing the kind of environment, apparatus and material that should be provided for children of infant school age coupled with most interesting accounts of how children respond to such conditions; for the records of children's responses Miss Serjeant has drawn on her wide experience and that of her students who are teaching in good progressive schools.

Such details of children's work and play, are useful only as illustrative material for a given theory or as suggestions for the framing of the day's programme in school. There is always the danger that a teacher will assume that because the children in one class of one school wished to count conkers or weigh flour for a cake, therefore it is right to tell other children to do likewise.

It seems to me of the utmost importance that the chapters dealing with number interests should be read

carefully and followed with caution. Many of us think that the attempts to get children to record their number experiences are made too early and that written records should be left until at least the first year in the junior school. Number bonds take longer to become part of a child's mental furniture than most teachers realize, for the capacity to generalize and to understand symbols is not common in children of under seven. Indeed, part of the fallacious generalizations that we all make from time to time may be partly due to the fact that in childhood we had to accept so many generalizations that we did not understand, and had little chance of proving.

Miss Serjeant and many teachers would justify the laborious making of all kinds of apparatus by stating that, by doing so, they rouse the children's interest in number. But at the right 'number age' the children acquire that experience which rouses their interest in counting and simple calculation without the help of artificial stimuli, and for practical purposes certainly written records are not required before the age of seven or later.

If only teachers could be induced to lengthen the practical stage and postpone the recording of such experience, we should have fewer children who come to the age of eight with number knots that it takes great skill and patience to disentangle.

But I am riding my own hobby horse and most teachers will be in agreement with Miss Serjeant.

I must not end this review without praising the very charming and instructive reproductions of the photographs taken in schools of children at their work and play and of what they accomplished.

N. Catty

### **The Consolidation of Rural Schools by G. W. Parkyn. (New Zealand Council for Educational Research. 18/6).**

The Hadow Report was published in November 1926, and about a year later the first proposals for reorganizing schools were considered by Education Committees in England. In urban areas for the most part there was not much criticism when it was suggested that the children from two All Standard Schools not far apart should be so reorganized that all those over twelve went to one, and those under twelve to the other. In rural areas, however, there was a strong reaction. The closure of the small village schools or the removal of children over twelve would break up the life of the village, and no children should be expected to



leave the village for educational purposes unless it was to attend a Grammar School. There could be no benefit, it was said, the idea was a cranky one, and great play was made of the break-up of village life to which this would lead. Nevertheless, some County Education Committees went ahead and from 1928 onwards senior children have been gathered into Area (now Modern) Schools. Village life did not break up and educational benefit ensued; but die-hard critics continue to ignore the evidence of the success of the scheme. Some of us have wished that reports could be made available upon experiments conducted elsewhere, as we knew they had been, with success. That wish has now been met by the publication of this admirable report.

In New Zealand, the problem of centralizing the small rural schools and of reorganization by taking the older children away from the younger was mooted long before it was in England. The Wanganui Education Board reported in 1889 that 'with a view to economy as well as increased efficiency in the teaching staff' it had attempted with success the amalgamation of the smaller schools. The Otago Education Board arranged for the transport of pupils, and by 1912 when the Cohen Commission sat 'it was strongly recommended that another attempt at consolidation should be made forthwith'. This was the first time that 'consolidation' was used in this context in official education papers. From 1925 onwards, it became generally accepted policy. What then has been the experience of New Zealand in applying such a policy?

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research decided in 1946 to sponsor a comprehensive study of the educational and social effects of consolidation, and appointed their Research Officer, H. C. McQueen, to do the work. In 1947 he accepted another post, and the Council then appointed G. W. Parkyn as the Research Officer with instructions to continue the survey. Mr. Parkyn is well known in this country to a number of educationists. He is a loyal and vigorous member of the New Education Fellowship, and was at one time Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Otago. He has had long experience of rural education both as pupil and as teacher. We expect something well worth reading and studying and we get it in his report.

His objective survey of the situation is carefully made and nothing misses his shrewd observation and examination. Amongst his findings we observe that: (i) the large school has the advantage in classification; (ii) the small schools on the whole have done

better work in the basic skills than all but the largest town schools; (iii) the large schools have the advantage in specialization amongst staff, and the small schools show only 'sporadic and uneven results' in music, art, literature and cultural studies generally; (iv) a wide circle of friendship is open to the child in the large school; on the other hand, children in the small school learn to be responsible for the younger ones and to be looked after by the older ones in a way that is characteristic of family life. The older ones are, however, unable to develop fully their deeper social interests in a restricted circle; (v) both teacher and child in the small school get to know one another much more intimately than elsewhere. Such understanding gives security to the child in the early years of life; (vi) the play essential to the social and emotional growth of little children can be provided at a small school, the older children are unduly restricted; (vii) walking, cycling and riding ponies is the usual way of going to the small school; the 'bus ride to the consolidated school introduces the child to a large company but these children spend on the average more time in travelling, and 'bus trips usually cause younger children more fatigue; (viii) the closing of a village school has had in most cases little direct effect upon the associational life of a locality. When a teacher is removed from a village, he or she is greatly missed as one who always takes part in the organized activities of the community. Clubs and Associations may also suffer when a school is closed; (ix) closer relations between the parents and the school can be

fostered when the school is small and situated where the pupils live. The large school can suffer from lack of contact and from parental indifference; (x) in providing valuable experience for teachers, the small school has the advantage; (xi) consolidation has reduced the number of responsible positions in the teaching service but has increased the proportion of assistants to Head Teachers in the Primary School.

His report concludes with a number of recommendations. In general the local country school should be retained for children at the Primary stage. Mr. Parkyn thinks that the optimum size of a single teacher Primary school would be between 12 and 25 pupils, with fewer than a dozen it is hard to ensure a rich enough social experience. Where it is not possible to retain a local Primary school, the children should be conveyed to the most suitable neighbouring small school but in some places the configuration of the land, the location and conditions of the roads and the available transport, may make it more convenient to convey them to a small township. Consolidated departments should be placed only in settlements that themselves have an effective community life and that are centres, at least potentially, of a wider community embracing the surrounding districts. The choice of the site should be determined only after careful study of the sociological structure of the district. It should never be chosen as the result of parochial jealousy and the struggle of local pressure groups 'acting from motives that are not relevant to educational needs'. In the larger townships the consolidated schools should separate the Primary from the Secondary departments. The large Primary consolidated schools which exist in some centres should gradually be disestablished, possibly by reopening an outlying school and conveying children to it. Special care should be taken to select teachers for small schools and special help should be given to them in their exacting work.

Mr. Parkyn has interesting recommendations to make about buildings and equipment and about the organization of transport. One recommendation will sound strange to us over here. The practice of employing teachers, he says, as 'bus drivers should be progressively discontinued. The fatigue and strain they suffer on the more difficult routes, the unavoidable interruption of their preparation for work and the obstacle to out-of-school co-operation with their colleagues far outweigh any advantages claimed for having teachers who can drive 'buses'.

The rural problem in New Zealand is not precisely the same as the rural

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problem in this country. Nevertheless, Mr. Parkyn's report would not be far out if it was submitted in part as a report on conditions in rural England. It must, therefore, be of very special interest to us. Mr. Parkyn's wisdom and commonsense show in all his assessments and the book can be strongly recommended to all rural teachers especially and to all who are engaged in educational work in this country. There is always a lot to be learned from study of the ways and means employed by others to overcome their difficulties. *Leslie R. Missen*

**Change in English Education :  
A Historical Survey. H. C.  
Dent (University of London Press,  
6/-)**

This book grew out of four lectures which Mr. Dent gave to teachers in the Chichester area in 1950 in a course whose general title was *The Sociological Background of Education*. It is in the main a historical survey of the development of primary and secondary education within the statutory system by one who believes that contemporary educational problems will only be solved if the lessons of the past are adequately understood, and if educational planning goes 'with the grain of the national character' and not against it.

Accordingly, he surveys (1) the motives which led to the development of popular education from the foundation of the S.P.C.K. onwards; (2) the history of the gradual transfer of the control and direction of popular education from the voluntary agencies to the statutory authority from 1833 to 1944; (3) the history of changes in the curricula of grammar, elementary and technical schools; and (4) the changed attitude to learning and teaching to-day, with special reference to 'activity', 'fusion of subjects' and teacher-training. The facts of educational history are presented in a lucid and significant pattern, and both teachers and students-in-training who find most histories of education too lengthy and fact-crammed will find here a useful guide in their study of the English educational tradition, provided they remember that Mr. Dent ceases from time to time to be the historian and becomes the polemicist.

He has given his own views on a number of controversial topics, among them the futures of different types of secondary school. He gives some sound advice on 'Activity', the 'fusion of subjects' and visual and measurement aids. Occasionally he invites challenge, as, for instance, when he expresses strong regret that many of the private schools to-day 'far from

being in the van of educational thought and practice, lag pathetically in the rear, still—alas!—fondly imagining themselves to be pioneers'. It cannot be said that his book does justice to the ideas, individuals and movements which have contributed to the development of modern educational thought and practice. Some readers will no doubt regret that the other six lectures in the Chichester course, which dealt with the sociological and psychological backgrounds of modern education, were not also given in this book.

Altogether, one arrives at the conclusion that Mr. Dent, while not averse to 'rational meditation' as an aid to the solution of our educational problems, is over-confident that English empiricism will suffice to provide the solutions to most of these problems. The fact that the English educational system 'grew slowly and empirically over a period of centuries' is doubtless the source of much of its strength, but it is also responsible for some of its weaknesses. These weaknesses Mr. Dent has largely ignored.

Although more than one reader is likely to cross swords with Mr. Dent when he ceases to be the historian and becomes the controversialist, none will read his book without getting a fuller understanding of the motives and the significant events which have helped to shape the variegated pattern of that remarkable unity in diversity which is the English educational system.

*Alexander Laing*

**Teaching Music in Schools.  
James Mainwaring. (Paxton. 7/-).**

The ever-increasing part played by music in adult life is in itself an indication of the need to explore and understand some of its possibilities during the school years. James Mainwaring in the opening chapter of his book *Teaching Music in Schools* draws attention to the part played by music in contemporary society, and the contribution it can make to the growth and development of the potential citizen. The place and function of music in present-day education is a subject which invites careful consideration and this book, as well as outlining some general principles involved in the teaching of school music, offers practical comments and suggestions for the teacher. The author, presupposing his reader to have some background and skill, aims to show how 'the ordinary teacher with average musicianship' may use his gifts for the maximum benefit of the children. Throughout the book there is emphasis on the importance of children learning through interest and personal experience, but despite this, Mr. Mainwaring's schemes show a rigidity which makes it difficult

to refrain from challenging his faith in modern methods of education.

The main part of the book, however, is devoted to suggestions for class activities in singing, movement, percussion band and instrumental work, all of which are dealt with through the successive stages of the Infant, Junior, and Secondary schools. These chapters are concisely and systematically planned, as indeed the author says all school music should be. For teachers who seek some concrete material on which to base their work, this will be a helpful book, provided they have the ability and imagination to adapt and develop further for themselves.

*D. Flynn*

**Children and the Theatre.**

*Caroline E. Fisher and Hazel  
Glaister Robertson. Revised Edi-  
tion. (Stanford University Press,  
California. Price \$4). London :  
(Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford  
University Press. 32/-).*

Miss Fisher, whose work in Drama arose from studies in the pedagogy of speech, here collaborates with Mrs. Robertson, M.A. (Education), Director of the Palo Alto 'Children's Theater' in a compendium of practical guidance of every aspect of producing plays acted by children for child audiences.

In the earlier chapters the advantages of working away from the atmosphere of school are stressed, and the repetition of these claims will be wearisome to the English reader and give rise to charges of extravagance. The stress is on the educational value of developing the habits of the cast rather than on any gains which might accrue to the children in the audience, except perhaps the call to emulation.

Among the new material in this Revision are sections on film-making and television. Palo Alto has had a successful project in making its sixteen millimetre film *Titian, the Boy Painter*, but this was on an elaborate scale and involved the services of a professional producer and director with a Hollywood crew. The 'cautions and exhortations' in regard to possibilities in education for television programmes of the popular type such as the series under the general title 'Stop, Look,—and Learn', are timely and sound.

It is the Third Section of the Volume which has most for the English reader and especially for the teacher. Its seventy pages, one third of the main text, give detailed information on Selection and Casting, Rehearsing, Directing and Acting, Costume, Mounting, most of which is directly adaptable to school conditions in this country. Such matters as Finances and Publicity are also the subject of detailed



advice, but this is less capable of application to our own conditions. The next fifty to sixty pages comprise brief notes on Direction, Manuscript, Designing, Lighting, Scenery, Costume, Make-up, Properties, Effects, Safety Precautions, etc., and though these are called 'Appendices' they contain some useful material very accessibly set out, if one is a little patient with technical terms which differ slightly from our own. It would

be difficult to find elsewhere so useful a series of guides in this field, and the Glossary is to be highly commended although we have English publications which have achieved this sort of aid.

*Ernest L. Fereday*

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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## MORAL VALUES AND PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

J. W. Tibble, Professor of Education, University College, Leicester

PROGRESSIVE education in the last hundred years developed as a series of movements which were sharply critical of the main tradition of educational practice. Until about the middle of the nineteenth century the protests of critics and the practices of pioneer teachers here and there had modified the tradition hardly at all. The establishment of universal education—the size of this problem, the range of children to be catered for, and in particular the need to train teachers for these children—led to a search for the underlying principles on which practices are based and a general questioning of procedures and methods.

Three things then happened which affect the climate of education to-day: (1) Educational theory itself became a tradition, a progressive tradition, the successive waves arising as critical developments of the ideas and practices of earlier pioneers. (2) This developing body of theory began to affect educational practice, not sporadically and occasionally as in the past, but more generally and systematically. The main instrument which brought this about was the development of teacher training as a system of education within the larger scheme of general education. If it were to be more than a narrow vocational training, a collection of hints and tips to teachers, it must rest on pedagogical principles which answered questions about the aims and purposes of education. Furthermore, the setting of teacher training led to a comparative treatment of methodology. Which method is better? How do we know that this is so? Under what conditions can these results be achieved? (3) This kind of concern led to a linkage between educational thought and psychology and, later on, the social sciences in general. The first attempts to treat education as an applied science are seen in this country toward the end of the century. Sir John Adam's *Herbartian Psychology Applied to Education* was immensely influential. The same

period saw the beginnings of child psychology with the work of Preyer, Stanley Hall, Sully and Binet; and these and later surveys and measurements of children's abilities, aptitudes and attitudes provided support and techniques for the progressive education movement launched in Chicago at the turn of the century.

In *The School and Society* (1900) Dewey restated Froebel's educational principles, calling attention to the two main strands in progressive educational theory. The first is the respect for the integrity and individuality of each child, regarded as an end in himself and as having within him the capacity for experience, activity, integration and growth which are the basis of all education. Secondly, the social aspects of this experience and activity are stressed, since human growth always takes place in and through a community. If it is society, in Rousseau's view, which enslaves and perverts men, it is also only through society that they can achieve full humanity.

Clearly, these two strands are closely related and this relationship has implications for the main theme of this paper—moral values in education. Since Rousseau was the first to define the problem in its modern setting (it is perhaps his greatest achievement), it may be useful to begin with that. As Rousseau saw it, neither God nor nature is responsible for the evil we see in man's behaviour. Evil arises out of the empirical, historical existence of mankind. 'The individual as such, as he comes from nature's workshop, is still without the pale of good and evil. He follows his natural instinct of self-preservation, and he is governed by his "self-love"; but this self-love has not yet degenerated into "selfish love" whose only satisfaction lies in the subjection of others to its will. Society alone is responsible for this kind of selfish love.'<sup>1</sup> Rousseau rejects, then, the view of an original

<sup>1</sup> E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 157.



perversion of the human will and the idea of the fall of man, while facing squarely the degeneration and evil he saw in the society of his time. But if these historic societies, into which men had stumbled, had made them evil, was not a society conceivable which would make them good? The worst evil lay in the loss of freedom, being subjected to the arbitrary will of others. True morality is impossible without freedom. *The Social Contract* is Rousseau's blueprint for transforming society from a product of blind necessity to one of freedom. The fact that he used, as tools for his thinking, the concepts of his time, the state of nature, the contract, the general will, does not invalidate his diagnosis of the problem, as Kant and many later thinkers have recognized. Morality implies both freedom and law; and when we act as fully moral beings we do, in some sense, will the common good.

Young children are not, of course, capable of fully moral, fully rational behaviour. In *Émile*, which was published in the same year as *The Social Contract*, Rousseau is asking what kind of education will best ensure that the child will be capable of such behaviour when he reaches the adult stage. *Émile* certainly fits, as few books on education do, Lord Keynes' prescription that words *ought* to be a little wild because they are the assaults of thought upon the unthinking. Its overstatements and paradoxes were aimed at the many stupidities in the child rearing and educational practice of the time. 'Take the road directly opposite to that which is in use, and you will almost always do right.'

Hence the first part of education should be purely negative, we should do everything by doing nothing, books only teach people about what they do not understand, we should keep away from moral questions, never command anything, give no verbal instructions, lose time not save it, and so on. These make sense if related to the abuses Rousseau was attacking. His main point, however, lay in the paradox which progressive education now accepts as a truism: that if we want *Émile* to become a fully rational moral adult we must let him be as fully and freely a child as the nature of childhood permits. Childhood has its own ways of feeling, thinking, behaving, its own tempo of development, and *Émile* must realize himself in this world, live through its stages if he is to reach the adult world with his will and reason uncorrupted.

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This does not mean letting children do as they like; they must realize 'the heavy yoke of necessity' imposed by their weakness and dependence. If Émile ought to abstain 'forbid him not, but prevent him, without explanation or argument . . . grant with pleasure and refuse with reluctance . . . but let the *no!* once pronounced be as a brazen wall, against which when a child hath some few times exhausted his strength without making any impression, he will never attempt to overthrow it again.'

Clearly, what Rousseau is aiming at here, on the level of childhood, corresponds to his aim for adult political man as formulated in *The Social Contract*: the capacity for control, self-control, acceptance of law, without breaking of the will, without being subjected to adult authority through 'emulation, jealousy, envy, pride, covetousness and servile fear'. We must always keep in mind Rousseau's distinction between 'natural man' and 'civilized man', which he assumes as a logical device, not as a means of historical or empirical description. The term 'good' is used in relation to both categories, and clearly the meaning is different in each. When Rousseau calls natural man good he means that his impulses are directed toward self-preservation and freedom, which in a non-social state would be the highest good. 'Our natural passions are extremely limited; they are, however, the instruments of our liberty, and tend to our preservation.' Good in this sense means something like useful, of practical value to the self-regarding ego, whereas moral good, of which the opposite is evil, appears only when our relations with others are concerned; it is a creation of man's social life. The two senses are made clear in this quotation: 'This passion (self-love) considered in itself, or as relative to us, is good and useful; and, as it has no necessary relation to any one else, it is in that respect naturally indifferent: it becomes good or evil, therefore, from our application of it, and the several relations we give it.'

The distinction can be more adequately made with the aid of later psychological concepts: in particular, by reference to Freud's delineation of the impulsive, impersonal *id*, the executive *ego*, and the controlling *super-ego*, with its social introjections and identifications. Rousseau's natural man would have an *id* and an *ego* but not a *super-ego* and what Rousseau was saying about child training was in effect this, 'For goodness

sake don't built up a primitive super-ego in the child, he is bound to misunderstand your moral precepts and admonishments; keep him free of all this until his will is strong and his reason has developed and he is capable of truly moral behaviour.' It cannot be, of course; social behaviour, involving problems of human relationships, begins at birth, or soon after, when the child finds it necessary to adjust to two or more persons at once. But in some sense, with whatever refinements, the distinction Rousseau is calling attention to has a certain validity for those responsible for child training. Young children are capable of error, egocentricity, temper tantrums, hate feelings, but not surely of sin, in any sensible use of the term. The assumption that they are, and treatment designed to eradicate, or at any rate suppress, their sinfulness has bedevilled centuries of child training and education. Every day was judgment day in the traditional classroom. In moral training we can certainly with advantage follow Rousseau's advice to lose time rather than save it, to make haste slowly. In the words of Dr. Rickman<sup>1</sup> 'There is a proper tempo in the assimilation of problems of morality which is peculiar to every individual, and nothing is harder, just as nothing in the long run is more rewarding, than a perception of that tempo. Short cuts to morality are neither moral nor are they short.'

'Morality cannot be implanted in a person, it can grow only at its own time and in its own way. Certain types of behaviour can, of course, be forced on a child or on an adult, but that is not morality. Morality is not behaviour in conformity to a standard of conduct, but the expression of a good relationship already existing in the mind and finding expression in everyday action and in crisis.'

'Morality involves a sensitive perception of the codes of ethics in the community, but the person must not lose himself in an identification with that community; one of the values of morality is its highly individual quality; perhaps . . . that is one of its chief biological (survival) values'.

When we turn from Rousseau to Dewey, we find the social nature of moral values not stated in paradoxical form but fully elaborated and exemplified. The essentially social nature of man's behaviour and consciousness is indeed the basic theme of his philosophy and affects all his

<sup>1</sup> *Year Book of Education*, 1951. Section 1, Ch. 4



thought on education. Dewey's attention is focussed on the point of interaction between the individual organism and the universe, and the point is a moving one. There is nothing in the universe or in man which is complete, certain, final, simple or determinate. The world is characterized throughout by process and change. Hence values do not exist in any ultimate or final manner but as functions in the individual-social flow of events. Dewey has no use for transcendental moral values and is sharply critical of ends or ideals which become 'a synonym for whatever is inspiring—and impossible.' Ends arise and function within action not beyond it and life is essentially action; thought, contemplation should arise from action and be subordinate to it. Dewey argues also that this pragmatic theory of values fuses inner motives and outer behaviour in purposeful action and avoids the quarrel in ethics between those who stress motives and intentions and those who stress conduct and consequences. Conflict between these two stresses can be particularly confusing to children and young people. Union between inner and outer is achieved when each situation is approached freshly as a new situation, when intentions are not regarded as ends in themselves but as operational instruments which may emerge in fruitful acts.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly the dichotomy between natural and civilized man disappears in Dewey's analysis. In *Human Nature and Conduct*, he deals first with habits as social functions, habits and will, custom and habit and then passes on to impulse and instinct. To the query why he did not begin with activities which are native and original instead of those which are secondary and acquired, he replies with a paradox. 'In conduct the acquired is the primitive. Impulses although first in time are never primary in fact; they are secondary and dependent.' This arises from the fact of infancy, because each human being begins life completely dependent upon others, and his behaviour is affected by this from the first. 'Even if by some miracle original activity could continue without assistance from the organized skill and art of adults, it would not amount to anything. It would be mere sound and fury. In short, the *meaning* of native activities is not native, it is acquired. It depends upon interaction with a matured social medium.' This leads

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, Ch. 26.

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him to a criticism of the current formulations of instinct theory and of the absurdity of trying to derive the immense variety of human customs and institutions from an array of instinctive tendencies. For Dewey the most important characteristic of human impulse, of basic human nature, is its plasticity: in the young, impulses are highly flexible starting points for activities which are diversified according to the ways in which they are used. In a sense, then, a human society is always starting afresh, and human customs and institutions are modified in the process. This continuous alteration has, for the most part, been unconscious and unintended. But there has now grown up some consciousness of the extent to which a future new society of changed purposes and desires may be created by a deliberate humane treatment of the impulses of youth. 'This is the meaning of education; for a truly humane education consists in an intelligent direction of native activities in the light of the possibilities and necessities of the social situation. But for the most part, adults have given training rather than education. An impatient, premature mechanization of impulsive activity after the fixed pattern of adult habits of thought and affection has been desired.'<sup>1</sup>

Original plasticity has been warped, the child's docility taken mean advantage of, loaded with convention, biassed by adult convenience. The delightful originality of the child is tamed. Adults distrust the child's intelligence while demanding a kind of conduct which requires a high order of intelligence if it is to be intelligent at all. The inconsistency is reconciled by instilling 'moral' habits which have a maximum of emotional empressement with a minimum of understanding and these deeply ingrained habitudes persist as infantilisms and irrationalities in the adult. 'And yet,' Dewey goes on, 'the intimation never wholly deserts us that there is in the unformed activities of childhood and youth the possibilities of a better life for the community as well as for individuals here and there. This dim sense is the ground of our abiding "idealization of childhood".' And he goes on to point out that the renewing of habit and impulse never wholly ceases to play its refreshing rôle in adult life, modifying the rigidities of custom. He wants the process to be more under man's conscious control. 'The moral problem in child and adult

alike as regards impulse and instinct is to utilize them for formation of new habits, or what is the same thing, the modification of an old habit so that it may be adequately serviceable under novel conditions . . . a valid moral theory contrasts with all those theories which set up static goals (even when they are called perfection), and with those theories which idealize raw impulse and find in its spontaneities an adequate mode of human freedom. Impulse is a source, an indispensable source, of liberation; but only as it is employed in giving habits pertinence and freshness does it liberate power.' For it is equally important to remember that 'Convention and custom are necessary to carrying forward impulse to any happy conclusion', and 'To view institutions as enemies of freedom and all conventions as slaveries, is to deny the only means by which positive freedom in action can be secured.'<sup>2</sup>

I have dealt with this at some length because I wanted to show that Rousseau and Dewey are dealing with the same problem and that it is a fundamental problem for education and life. Certainly the distinction we noted earlier between the two senses of good disappears in Dewey's scheme. 'The reason for dividing conduct into two distinct regions, one of expediency and the other of morality, disappears when the psychology that identifies ordinary deliberation with calculation is disposed of . . . The recognition of the true psychology also reveals to us the nature of good or satisfaction. Good consists in the meaning that is experienced to belong to an activity when conflict and entanglement of various incompatible impulses and habits terminate in a unified orderly release in action.'<sup>3</sup>

Now you may not find that a very satisfactory definition of the good; and we have to agree, I think, with those who criticize the pragmatists for establishing their case by smuggling in terms which cannot be accounted for on their premises alone: terms like 'happy conclusion', 'liberation', 'true', 'real', 'orderly' which appear in the quotations I have used. We might say indeed that Dewey's formulation satisfies him because he is taking for granted moral values from the main stream of western religious and philosophic thought. Like all of us he is more in debt to the traditions he attacks than he is fully able to realize. His position is in a sense writ large and much more crudely in American civilization

<sup>1</sup> *Human Nature and Conduct*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.



to-day. Consciously it is largely pragmatist and experimental: but, fortunately for the world maybe, these attitudes protrude from a background which includes many values and ideals which it would be difficult to establish on a pragmatic basis alone. The pragmatist is rather like a sailor steering his boat by compass. He is right in stressing that his main job is to keep his eye on his compass needle and his sails and the weather and remember his sailing directions and make all the necessary adjustments to keep the boat on its course. But he is wrong if he says that anything so distant and transcendent as the magnetic pole is irrelevant to his situation. And if it is not his job to speculate about magnetic fields and the like, it is certainly valid for somebody else to do so.

I suggest that as teachers we are in a position similar to the sailor's. We need our distant points of reference—fixed stars, magnetic poles, countries of destination and origin—as well as our pointer readings which record the incessant changes of our immediate situation. As I said earlier, it is absurd to treat each day in school, in traditional style, as if it were the day of judgment; but it is equally absurd for the teacher to begin each morning as if this were the first day of creation.

We may well question, then, whether the individual-social life process is a sufficient existence base for moral values. Some values undoubtedly do have their basis in this process; they might include evil—Rousseau and Froebel would agree—and certain mixed values and approximate goods, but no ultimate goods; there is no place for these in Dewey's scheme. Again we might ask whether social efficiency is an adequate educational goal and whether the experimental method is not applied too universally and arbitrarily. We can grant that these are very important aspects of educational aim and method but may also hold that other general aims and methods are equally important, *e.g.* the steady pursuit of knowledge or skill for which no pressing immediate problem provides the stimulus; or the resolution of a contradiction among ideas which has no reference to an immediate situation. I need not enlarge on some of the excesses perpetrated in the name of progressive education in America. Dewey himself lived long enough to criticize them sharply and to disown some of his alleged offspring. And it is

in any case good and proper that a body of educational theory in this country and the U.S.A. should have arisen in recent years which is critical of Dewey and the progressive movement.

Having said that, I think we can be fully grateful to Dewey for stressing that the essence of the teacher's task, when he is teaching, is to concentrate on the changes and adjustments taking place in a very fluid situation, the classroom situation. The aims and goals and standards and subject matter are all important, but should be in the background of our consciousness as we teach; the foreground should be occupied in watching the points of interaction between the child's mind and the world, the inter-relationships among the children and between them and us. None of these can be directly observed; and if we are as teachers specially skilled at anything, it is surely a skill in noticing and interpreting the clues offered us by children's behaviour in the classroom and school situation; and in responding by adjustments which will increase understanding, decrease bafflement, reduce conflict and strain, produce harmony and satisfaction. It is a craft which can fully extend us, of whose mysteries and subtleties we need never come to an end; on our best days it may rise to an art. From this point of view, what ham performers were the old-timers with their gesturing canes and booming voices and threats and exhortation. And alas! how often do conditions force us to fall short of the highest standards of craftsmanship even to-day.

To return from practice to theory, we may note that Dewey's emphasis on the individual-social situation has been caught up into what is undoubtedly the dominant theme of psychological thought and research in the last twenty years. Work has been done in a variety of fields which not only provides a much more detailed picture of social inter-relationships, but which also provides better formulations of the problems and new techniques for studying them. As Gardner Murphy points out, 'every nook and cranny of psychology has been invaded with the conception of structure, or system, or interdependence; every theoretical system to-day either rejects atomism or admits its incompleteness, or at least apologizes for it . . . Since in general the trend is clearly in accord with general trends in physics toward fields and wholeness, and general trends in biology toward the actualization of



evolutionary patterns involving the interdependence of organs, of whole individuals and of species, this movement in psychology is fully in the modern spirit.<sup>1</sup> Thus we may mention the field theory of Lewin and his school, Moreno's work in social psychology, Piaget's child study, the modification of Freudian theory by Horney, Fromm, and Erickson, shifting the emphasis from biological to social, Sherif's experimental work and the influence of cultural anthropology through the studies of Malinowski, Linton, Mead, Benedict and others leading from field studies of primitive peoples to studies of culture patterns within Western Civilization itself.

I have time to select only one example which is relevant to our theme. In *Childhood and Society*, Erickson is concerned, as a psycho-analyst who is also a field anthropologist, with remapping the interactions between innate impulses and social habits, and with the relationships between child training and later norms of behaviour and personality traits. He notes that the recurrent theme of psycho-analysis has been the frustration of childhood affecting the individual's later life. 'In this book we suggest that, to understand either childhood or society, we must expand our scope to include the study of the way in which societies lighten the inescapable conflicts of childhood with a promise of some security, identity and integrity. In thus reinforcing the values of the ego, societies create the only condition under which human growth is possible',<sup>2</sup> and he goes on, 'The study of identity, then, becomes as strategic in our time as the study of sexuality was in Freud's time.' Rousseau, we may add, was equally concerned with both, in his own way and time, foreshadowing the pre-occupations of ours.

The problem is, as we all know, that increasing mechanization and urbanization has given us a varied, sprawling and de-personalized sort of civilization with almost every conceivable contrast and conflict in it between old ways and new, and this applies to moral values as to the rest. It gives us a particularly acute problem in arranging the stages of child training so that the child discovers what he *is* and what he is expected to be at each stage. As Erickson notes of an Indian tribe he studied, the training was consistent. As in many other primitive tribes,

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<sup>1</sup> G. Murphy, *An Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology*, p. 295.

<sup>2</sup> E. H. Erickson, *Childhood and Society*, p. 237.



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infants and young children were given no rigid training, were by our standards indulged and encouraged to be individualists. 'There is no condemnation of infantile habits while the child is developing that system of communication between self and body and self and kin on which the infantile ego is based'.<sup>1</sup> When strong in body and sure in self, he is then subjected to a tradition of relentless shaming focussed on his public and social behaviour which shows him clearly what is expected of a young adult of his tribe. Our own system is in a sense the reverse of this. We have gone in for, and still adhere to in large measure, a rigorous system of infant training based on control of organic and physical behaviour, establishing guilt feelings and stressing early the importance of right and wrong, good and bad. But later, at adolescence, our adult guidance becomes relatively ineffective. The youth is exposed as it were to the full blast of the contradictions and variations of our complex culture and is expected to sort it out for himself and cope

with problems which indeed baffle us as adults. Our guidance at this stage wavers between (a) suggesting that he shut his eyes to much that is going on and continue as if he were still a child; (b) urging him to be independent and individualist and make his choice among the many norms offered to him, as if indeed he were already grown up. This is not very consistent. It has been well said that in our culture adolescence is a sort of no-man's land between childhood and the adult stage and no youth can be blamed for having difficulty in finding out what he is in this stage, because we do not know. Some parents and teachers, indeed, act as if the youths in their care could be popped into a sort of moral refrigerator for the duration of this period.

What then should we do? I am afraid there is no easy answer. But this recent work certainly endorses some of the main emphases in the progressive education movement: on the one hand that we should let up on early childhood, give the young child root room, help him to come to terms with the world of childhood in his own time and way, not turn questions of expediency into questions of morality, control him without blatant assertion of adult authority, encourage activity and interest: on the other hand, when it comes to adolescence, that we should at any rate not close our eyes to the complexity and difficulty of the problems which face young people then and help them as far as we can by frank discussion and sympathetic treatment.

In general we can agree with Erickson 'that only a gradually accruing sense of identity, based on the experience of social health and cultural solidarity at the end of each major childhood crisis, promises that periodical balance in human life which—in integration of the ego stages—makes for a sense of humanity. But wherever this sense is lost, wherever integrity yields to despair and disgust, wherever generativity yields to stagnation, intimacy to isolation, and identity to diffusion, an array of associated infantile fears are apt to become mobilized. For the superego is the internalization of the external inequality of parent and child; and only an ego identity safely anchored in the "patrimony" of a cultural identity can balance the superego in order to produce a workable equilibrium.' Here, then, is a contemporary psychologist's restatement of the problem which concerned both Rousseau and Dewey.

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Erickson, *Childhood and Society*, p. 138.



# AN EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION IN INDIA

V. N. Sharma, Director, Children's Garden School, Madras, India

MY wife and I are connected with a new movement in India to build the child's education upon his Indian tradition and heritage and at the same time to utilize the rich experience which the great educators from Europe, like Froebel, Pestalozzi, Montessori and Paul Geheeb, gave to us.

India is known throughout the world as an ancient centre of human culture and civilization. It was in the forest universities and in the enchanting landscapes on the banks of the great rivers that Indian teachers taught the elements of human knowledge, the unity of the individual with that cosmic individuality known in Indian literature as the *Brahman*. Their philosophy and thought is expressed in the immortal Vedas and Upanishads.

Centuries passed, dynasties came and went; but this stream of Indian culture and thought lived, withstanding all troubles and turmoils. But thunder and darkness came as India passed into the eighteenth century. Foreign rulers who could not understand the sensitive nature of the people tried to thrust on them their own pattern of education and thought.

However, great leaders, especially teachers, knew that co-operation with these forces without a steady background of their own culture and genius would lead nowhere. Tagore in the North set a great example as the leader of Modern India by taking inspiration from the past. The great teacher Swami Sradananda built a modern forest university on the banks of the River Ganges in the Himalayas for a similar purpose. Mahatma Gandhi sounded a trumpet call to the sleeping people: Behold the rich truth you possess in your own hearts and bring it out in its living form for the good and welfare of your countrymen, poor and rich, low and high!

Indian education, from times immemorial, endeavoured to spread the message of human freedom, making the educator—in the words of Tagore—use his mind without fear, holding his head high, striving always to move towards perfection. This means, in other words, a Himalayan courage to seek the knowledge for which we are born and brought up in this world. The educational system, patronized and controlled by an alien rule which did not understand

this sensitive feeling and immortal vision of the Indian soul, could not uphold the genius of India, allowing the Indian child to follow its own path of understanding, the purpose for which he was born. Any institution and any individual that tried to follow the ancient paths of India was looked on as a disloyal citizen and a disturbing element.

My wife and I came back from Europe, having gained first-hand knowledge and experience from progressive educational institutions and their famous leaders. In particular we were influenced by Paul Geheeb, at whose feet we had the honour to sit and listen to his mature experience, and we enjoyed the privilege of working as his colleagues for several years in the famous Odenwaldschule in Germany and later on in Switzerland when he had to migrate to seek asylum to follow up his work. We dreamed of building up an educational community based on the traditional culture of the past of India and at the same time utilizing the rich experience we had gained from Paul Geheeb. We had no money with which to start this task, and few friends who could appreciate our ideas and plans as I had been away from my homeland in search of new knowledge for more than seven years.

We sought humbly to make the following ideals our background principles to suit the modern times:

(1) We welcome children of all races, languages, religions, classes and castes. All children are equally loved and treated by us and no child is compelled to do anything against his or her creed. In the matter of religious study we encourage neither a religious class nor a cult which emphasizes a particular faith and a particular creed which might bring disharmony and misunderstanding between the children of God.

(2) To us the best way of teaching religion to a child is through the atmosphere of the school life, that is to respect and love others, young and old, and to be just and truthful in every task in which we are engaged, and through the personal example of the teacher.

(3) The school will strive to maintain the intimate atmosphere of a good home, trying to fulfil its ideal of a children's garden in the real educational sense, where the older ones—the



teachers—are the careful gardeners of the most delicate plants—the little ones. The children in this garden are encouraged to move freely and fearlessly among their elder brothers—the teachers—like members of one family. In this connection the school keeps two aims in view; firstly to develop the child as an individual, drawing out all the best and highest it has in itself; and secondly to educate and train the child as a member of the community, sharing the life with others and helping his comrades, as a preparation for wider and fuller service in the world.

We started the school purely as a Kindergarten on the 7th September, 1937, in the newly-built garden colony where, fortunately, we found accommodation. Swami Saswathananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission in Madras, took a personal interest in our work on our return to India and he came forward to bless our venture in a public ceremony to which a number of friends, mostly educationists, were invited. All these friends assured us all possible encouragement and interest in our work.

During the first year, however, the response from the parents was not encouraging and by the time of the summer holidays of 1938 we broke up with only fourteen children on the rolls. During the second year things improved a little; the parents began to understand what we were aiming at in this school in South India. The numbers increased to forty-nine; and the big problem of providing accommodation for the growing number had to be faced. Along with this there came a request from many parents that we should start a boarding school. As a consequence we opened a hostel as a home for children whose parents were away in many remote parts of India and who required a real home atmosphere for their inner and outer development. But the uphill task in this infant stage was to convince the Government, and particularly the Directorate of Public Instruction in Madras, of the necessity for a school of this special type. The rules framed by the Government did not contemplate such a school since we wanted to begin nursery education from the child's second year. A number of objections were raised by the Government, who doubted the necessity for a school for children of so young an age. Ultimately, however, the Directorate was satisfied and allowed us to carry on our work as an experimental school, giving

us full freedom to implement such experiments as we felt would help the child in his development.

As the years passed, our responsibilities grew for the parents of the children who passed through our Kindergarten stage wished them to continue their education with us. So we had to start a new department providing education up to the age of fourteen. This meant more accommodation, more teachers, and more helpers. The work is individual and children are grouped in small numbers according to their intellectual attainment and their physical strength. By the time we closed our school year in 1946-47 we had 162 children between the ages of two and seven (in nine groups) in the Kindergarten department, and 384 children between the ages of seven and fourteen (in eighteen groups) in the School, with a teaching staff of fifteen for the Kindergarten department and twenty-five in the School department. Children had come from different parts of India, speaking different languages, and instruction had to be given, especially in all intellectual subjects, in their own mother tongue. That meant that we had to provide the languages Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese and Malayalam, current in South India, as well as Hindi, Marathi and Gujarathi, the languages spoken in North India.

Then we found the need to train a number of young men and women who could work in the spirit of our ideals; for it was hard to find teachers who could adjust themselves harmoniously to our work. So in 1947, with the help of the Government, we started a Training Institute, the first of its kind in India, to provide training for Kindergarten teachers.

Then came a phase of new activity. The mothers of our children who lived in the neighbourhood of the school, and who wished to refresh their knowledge and understanding by taking up special courses in language and culture, asked us to open a section for the educational training of mothers. Other elderly women joined these classes, taking advantage of the new facilities offered to them. The work was not stopped here. Another branch of women's work sprang up under the name of Stri Seva Mandir, for we found a great demand from poor and helpless women for full primary education for which they had had no facilities in their childhood and which they desired to complete, even though they happened to be as old as thirty, forty and,



in some cases, fifty. Along with formal education they wanted some technical training such as cloth-printing, dressmaking, embroidery and domestic science. In this connection I must mention a great lady who is humble in her demands and silent in her day-to-day work—Srimati Sundaramma, who took up this responsibility and stood with us in all our difficulties, carrying on the work with great success since it was started in 1948.

Our work has not stopped here. Like the famous Banyan tree of India whose branches and roots are ever-expanding to give shade and shelter in all times of the year to all that come to its shade, the Children's Garden School is not satisfied with its present work. It tries to spread its message of human education and the education of mankind to all types of persons, young and old, men and women, that come to it for education as well as for re-education. The Children's Garden School has started new branches for children who cannot come to us because of the distance. There is more demand for such schools outside Madras city and now we are doing all we can to start such schools in various parts of South India.

The school, in all its various departments, Kindergarten, Middle School, Training Institute for young teachers, mothers' classes, women's educational courses, hums from morning till evening with innumerable activities; not only formal education but also a number of extra-curricular subjects to make the young and old, boys and girls, men and women, happy and eager to experience that kind of human education which can make them all rich, physically and emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. All things are taken easily and there is no examination or detention for any child. Each can take such subjects as he needs to study, and work at them in peace and at his own speed. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, members of every caste, creed, sex and class, live here as a happy family. No one is aware that he or she belongs to this creed, or that class, or that sex. The religious festivals and feasts of all communities are celebrated with reverence and honour. Language is no barrier at all in this miniature world of worlds; there is a human language which is spoken, without words and in silence, with respect and consideration towards each and every one. No one knows who is rich, who is poor, who

belongs to the highest caste or who belongs to the lowest, untouchable caste. Teachers here are the elder brothers and sisters of the younger ones, always willing to attend to the needs and wishes of the children entrusted to their care and trust. So the children regard their teachers with all reverence and respect, loving them and working hand-in-hand with them.

Not everything I describe and paint is perfect yet. There are innumerable difficulties in building up this world for the children of India. There have been times when we were desperate, helpless and despondent. The Great War disturbed our peace and tested our strength and courage. We had to put up with the limited space which was not an ideal one for the expansion of our activities. Critical minds from the outer world told us that things were not as they ought to be. Yet we have never moved away from the path we have chosen in service to the child of India. We found our peace and happiness in being with the children and working with them. This alone gave us courage and strength to move forward and see only the illumination of the sun, even on the dark days when the sun was not visible. We did not make much fuss about our weaknesses, our imperfections; these are our friends and guide our path, for they are constantly burnt in that fire of knowledge and understanding which we, both children and elders, kindle from day to day. Mysterious is the Divine power and Divine light! It has uplifted us from our worries and sorrows, reminding us that we should not be satisfied with the things that we have achieved and pointing us forward and forward from the Unreal to the Real, from the Darkness to Light, and from the Death to Immortality.

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# SOME CONFUSIONS OF MR. BANTOCK

James Hemming

THIS is a curious book. Mr. Bantock moves about enthusiastically in the jungle he creates from his ideas of other people's ideas. He scatters a wake of criticisms and quotations as he goes, apparently impervious to the fact that neither his quotations nor his criticisms 'add up'. Just when you think he has disappeared for good into the fog of his own confusion, he comes running back to the spot from which he started, puffing sedulously, and clearly under the impression that he has covered a great deal of ground. He behaves in this way time and time again without ever formulating his case. This way of writing a book permits him to be extremely discursive; it also permits him to be all things to all men—especially those who are looking for an excuse to accept their lack of thought as thought.

Short of writing a book of equal length it would be quite impossible to deal with all the confusions and inconsistencies that crop up in *Freedom and Authority in Education*.<sup>1</sup> However, some attempt must be made to deal with some of the more blatant of them. First: these words, Authority and Freedom. Mr. Bantock is very ready to admonish all and sundry to avoid looseness in language. However, he never makes it plain in which ways he is using these two extremely abstract nouns. Authority in education can mean the authority of content (facts are facts); or the authority of goals (examinations must be passed); the authority of centralized administration (as existing in many parts of the world); the authority of function (teachers have special responsibilities); the authority of status (teachers have the *right* to command); the authority of social necessity (an educational system must be in tune with the society in which it exists); the authority of group life (we have to live together decently); the authority of the culture (human and cultural standards must be maintained); the authority of common purpose (we seek to achieve our aims *together*); and the authority of absolute values (school life must accord with the Christian dogma), to name only the more obvious kinds of authority relevant to education. Which forms of authority Mr. Bantock accepts and which he rejects is never made clear. Every sort of education—other than

the lunatic fringe, which we can ignore—has its mode of authority. The vital question is not 'authority or not?' but 'which forms of authority?'. The book gives such a partial answer as to be no answer at all. One is left wondering exactly where Mr. Bantock stands.

What Mr. Bantock means by 'Freedom' is also obscure. Freedom must always operate within limits. Absolute freedom means absolute unrelatedness and, therefore, absolute isolation—death in fact. No system of education is so restricted that it denies all self-determination in action to the child; no system so unstructured that no limits are imposed on private impulse. Modern education aims neither at the school where teachers are authoritarian and the children subservient; nor that where children are authoritarian and teachers subservient. It seeks to establish a community in which authority is directly related to the actual functional responsibilities of those who bear them and in which the actions of all are limited by the common needs and common purposes of the community. Within the limits of that framework, individuality is encouraged to the full, both because it is valued in itself and because, by fostering the variety of persons within the community, the community becomes enriched, thereby offering a better environment for the growth of individuality. Mr. Bantock does not appear to understand this democratic pattern of freedom. He holds that children become inflated if they are called upon to share in common responsibilities; and that regular participation in choice (*any* level of choice presumably) is too much for them to bear. It was John Dewey's view that freedom includes 'the right to have our desires and choices *included* as factors in events' [my italics]. Mr. Bantock appears to wish to exclude children from that right: that is to exclude them from education in the use of choice and the practice of co-operation, which means, as the alternative, to bring them up with spoon-fed minds. As Erich Fromm has shown, such persons, not knowing how to use freedom, will both fear it and refuse to accept the responsibilities that go with it.

Our struggling attempts to follow Mr. Bantock's thinking are further bogged down by his selection of Matthew Arnold, Cardinal Newman and D. H.

<sup>1</sup> *Freedom and Authority in Education*, by G. H. Bantock (Faber, 1951). See also Kenneth Barnes' review, *New Era*, November, 1952, and A. K. C. Ottaway, January, 1953.



Lawrence as models from whom to gain a dependable educational philosophy for the modern world. These writers are, of course, well worth studying for their forceful and stimulating ideas, but to imply that one can abstract from the sum total of their approaches a sort of common denominator of essential educational thought, supremely able to bring clarity to our modern muddles, is to strain the virtue of these three fascinating personalities too far. In this matter of freedom for instance, each believes in freedom, but each imposes very different limits on freedom. Arnold was a free-thinking deist. To Arnold a free man was a person who had become well-formed by contact with the best in nature and art.

We cannot kindle when we will

The fire that in the heart resides.

The spirit bloweth and is still,

In mystery our soul abides:

But tasks in hours of insight willed

Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

Cardinal Newman's concept of human freedom was much more precisely limited. Newman regarded religious dogma as the only logical basis for human life. That sets up a limit to freedom of thought and action more rigid than any accepted by Arnold, or by Lawrence. Newman was also very conscious of ignorance as another limit to freedom (an aspect of freedom which Dewey emphasizes in *Human Nature and Conduct* and elsewhere). In addition Newman also clearly regarded social obligation as a third major limit.

In complete contrast to both Arnold and Newman, D. H. Lawrence believed freedom to lie in the capacity to live by unclouded impulse. He is at one with Arnold in deploring the 'heads o'er taxed' and 'palsied hearts' of modern man, but shows no accord with Arnold's respect for the intellect.

Now freedom, as I have already remarked, is only to be understood in terms of the limits upon it. Arnold, Newman, Lawrence, and, one assumes, Mr. Bantock too, all impose different limits upon it. Then what is the freedom that this book purports to be about? We are nowhere told. At times it appears to mean self-assertion, at times self-determination, at other times again it means lack of order, and so on. Bantock provides us no signpost in a wilderness of possibilities.

Within the first three chapters of the book another fundamental confusion emerges. Mr.

Bantock detests planners. 'Any plan', he tells us on page 32, 'implies the imposition of something dead—because abstract and preconceived—on the living organism.' He rejects John Dewey and Karl Mannheim largely because they dare to suggest that education should be so planned that it prepares children for participation in a democratic community. But on the very first page of chapter one we are told that we live in an era of rapid change. Now you can certainly avoid planning if you live in a static world; or you can avoid planning in a changing world and wait until change overwhelms you. What you cannot do is to save your culture in a changing world by refusing to plan in terms of the changes going on. However, even at the moment when one is beginning to accord to Mr. Bantock the sympathy due to a twentieth-century Canute, he turns round on himself and, in chapter three, having presumably forgotten his strictures of chapter two, advocates 'rational forethought and control' in education. What is 'planning' other than 'rational forethought and control'? And how can forethought be rational if it omits to include full cognisance of the sort of society in which the adult must play his part?

Another muddle in Mr. Bantock's mind appears when he strives to show that all education that has a social objective distorts individual personality (even though Newman, one of Mr. Bantock's models, wrote: 'If then a practical end must be assigned to a university course, I say it is that of training good members of society'<sup>1</sup>). We all know that socially-directed education can be used deliberately to condition children to fit without complaint into a totalitarian society. To banish all types of social preparation from democratic education on that account is, however, as illogical as to exclude mathematics from the syllabus of schools because totalitarian *régimes* train mathematicians. By turning his back on education for democracy Mr. Bantock ignores the important evidence that individuality can grow only in a social situation in which the individual feels involved and at home. To skimp social education in the modern world—where small intimate, self-educating communities are rare—is to condemn many children to isolation for life. Professor Mannheim was one of the first to stress this—to show that personal individuation and social integration interact to the benefit of each

<sup>1</sup> *The Idea of a University*.



other *in a democracy*. Let it be noted that democracy is the only form of social organization which thrives on diversity and therefore seeks to foster personal differentiation. It follows that the schools in a democracy need to work out for themselves an appropriate way of life planned to prepare children for responsible participation in a democratic society. Such planning, far from being a threat to our cultural values, is a condition of their survival. Culture draws its vitality neither from coerced nor from isolated persons, but from free men conscious of involvement with others.

Another inconsistency that runs right through the book leaves one helpless to discover Mr. Bantock's point of view on the rôle of academic education in general and the relationship between intellectual and emotional education in particular—educational issues that are of considerable importance to-day. The modern point of view on these matters is clear, even though it is only very tardily being applied in practice. It is that facts taught should be relevant to the child's experience and level of development, that aesthetic education should be directed to the gradual development of the child's own values, that subjects should be so taught that the right attitude towards knowledge develops along with mastery of content, and that intellectual and emotional activity should be promoted together in school work by stimulating the child's interest and prompting his own thought in acquiring what Matthew Arnold called 'vital knowledge'.

At times Mr. Bantock appears to support this point of view, at times he sweeps it aside, and at times so flounders about that it is impossible to know where he is heading. Let us follow his Protean passage through the chapters. Early in the book, he appears to be with the traditionalists. He opposes the idea of deliberately building into the curriculum a content of general education as a background to specialist knowledge; he deprecates 'a too great contempt for facts as such' in modern education; he condemns (page 66) 'a theory of the nature of man which values the spontaneous rather than the premeditated, the impulse rather than the conscious action, the emotional rather than the ratiocinative'. (This statement should be especially considered against what he has to say on D. H. Lawrence.) A little later, in the chapter on Matthew Arnold, he slips from the traditional to the progressive outlook by quoting with approval Arnold's 'advanced' views:

'But governing the teacher's whole design of instruction . . . should be the aim of calling forth, by some means or other, in every pupil a sense of pleasurable activity and creation; he should resist being made a mere ladder with information' (page 97).

(Notice the 'pleasurable', and the importance given to the child's feeling right.)

Cardinal Newman, to whom we are introduced in the next chapter, modified his educational thinking considerably in the course of his life. His matured views however, ably substantiated by Mr. Bantock's quotations, were:

1. That the human being is developing throughout life.
2. That religious dogma is supreme.
3. That an intelligent man should have some contact with the whole field of knowledge.
4. That enlargement of mind 'consists, not merely in the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas hitherto unknown to it, but in the mind's energetic and simultaneous action upon and towards and among those new ideas, which are rushing in upon it' (page 128).
5. That the personal relationship between teacher and student is of fundamental importance in education: 'An academic system without the personal influence of teachers upon pupils is an arctic winter; it will create an ice-bound, petrified, cast iron University, and nothing else' (page 131).

There are certain inconsistencies here. For example, Cardinal Newman valued the knowledge which was itself the product of the scientific doubt he deprecated. Nevertheless, a clear pattern emerges: education should be liberal, producing in due season a sensitive and growing mind, well stored with knowledge and ideas and able to use them in productive thought. The approach is firmly intellectual but implies pleasure in the activities of the mind and stresses personal relationships. Such an approach requires a backing of general education and a cultivation of the capacity to think clearly which some of Mr. Bantock's early assertions preclude.

While we are still battling to discover what Mr. Bantock's views really are, we find ourselves required to knit D. H. Lawrence into what has already become a complicated jumble of values. Lawrence would have no truck whatever with the intellect. He begged man to 'turn again to the



dark gods, which are the dark promptings and passion-motives inside you'. He detested 'mind-knowledge'. His ideal is: 'living, spontaneous individuality in every man and woman'. The ideal educational system to help achieve this objective will:

1. Leave the majority of mankind illiterate so that they may live from their 'dark promptings', untroubled by knowledge. 'The great mass of humanity should never learn to read and write—never' (page 178).
2. Hammer home the 3 R's in the good old-fashioned way.
3. Eschew all nonsense about personal relations: 'The *personal* element, personal supervision is of no moment' (page 179).
4. Teach nothing but the 3 R's; let the child absorb what else he needs by following the undistorted promptings of his solar plexus: 'Let us have a bit of solid, hard, tidy work. And for the rest, *leave the children alone*' (page 175).
5. Not bother about class sizes since the only schooling necessary is rigid instruction in short concentrated periods.

There is of course pertinency mixed with the madness in all that. This strange, tormented, mother-fixated genius has a wealth of wild sense in all he writes. He has a pagan, primitive approach to our concrete, gadget-ridden, restless, spiritually-starved community. He is an antidote to excessive intellectualism. What is amazing is that Mr. Bantock, who has up to this point in the book been veering strongly if erratically towards traditional teaching of subjects and facts, suddenly devotes the longest chapter in the book to Lawrence's educational views. Perhaps most incredible of all, he juxtaposes Lawrence, who raved against 'ideas', to Newman whose principal educational work is *The Idea of a University*. Mr. Bantock certainly attempts to dodge the come-back by writing at the end of the chapter: 'of course, I do not put Lawrence forward as providing a *programme*'. We are, at the end of much reading, still completely in the dark about Mr. Bantock's views on the right balance of emotional and intellectual education. In a community which is losing through mental ill-health about £100,000,000<sup>1</sup> annually in cash value alone, quite apart from the loss in human happi-

ness and cultural vitality, this is not an unimportant question. Let it be noted that most of these maladjusted people, moreover, are the products *not* of 'progressive' education but of a traditional, authoritarian, academic system which, even at the very present, widely prevails.

Mr. Bantock appears to be quite unaware of his own inconsistencies. Instead of a long overdue clarification in the last chapter, we get more confusion. No doubt the point he seeks to make is that education must be directed to a purpose that transcends the merely utilitarian and should be lit by a vision that includes all that is best in human experience. There 'progressive' educationists are completely with him. They have been pleading for years for this broadening of purpose and vision in the face of a narrow subject-bound curriculum that has been so geared to academic examinations that it has tended to produce standardized spoon-fed minds rather than cultivated individuals. However, Mr. Bantock does not make even this point because, if the disparate forms of authority and educational purpose promulgated by Arnold, Newman and Lawrence are all *equally* valid then, presumably, our educational problems will be solved—according to Mr. Bantock—if every administrator, head teacher and teacher imposes on the child his *particular* pattern of authority and purpose. Certainly the personal values of educators are needed in education. But if you exclude common social values from your authority and purpose in education, as Mr. Bantock seeks to do, then the result is chaos; society loses its common elements of thought and feeling and the basis for the survival of culture disappears. It is, indeed, such a chaos which we are now enduring and the cure of it is not less education in preparation for a democratic society but more.

The way to go is forward not back. At present, our society is transforming itself from a mechanical political democracy, governed by an aristocracy of birth and privilege, into a participant democracy governed by an aristocracy of leadership created in every age for that age by the operation of equality of opportunity in education. The growing pains are uncomfortable. Extremists both of the rush-forward and hurry-back variety inevitably exist. It is a time when men must be both determined and patient. Yet the way ahead is clear enough as is demonstrated whenever devolution of authority and the true

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. J. D. Sutherland's estimate in *The British Journal of Medical Psychology*, Sept., 1952 p. 6.



democratic spirit come together, whether in a school, a factory, a farm, a mine, a ship or elsewhere. The authority they have in common is reverence for life (a term which Lawrence and Schweitzer share) and their purpose is a re-integrated self-supporting, productive community.

Authority as *authority* becomes domination and is destructive of individuality; linked to function and *accepted* purpose, authority becomes a powerful formative influence. Democracy is the only framework which, at this stage in history, can make a synthesis by uniting supra-personal purpose and authority with personal responsibility and freedom. Mr. Bantock is vague and inconsistent because he fails to understand this. His book is an 'against' book because he has yet only a hazy idea of what to be 'for'. So, inevitably, no synthesis emerges after all from the last chapter.

Mr. Bantock's last word of all is to plead with us to 'recapture a sense of purpose' in education, and to make it a high purpose so that those involved in its service may get a true perspective of themselves instead of becoming lost in the cul-de-sac of self-conceit. To which we all devoutly say, amen. Many of us have been pleading that way for years. Where Mr. Bantock floors you is that he implies that a sense of purpose is to be recaptured by sending our as yet only-slightly-transformed educational system back to the rigours of undemocratic authori-

tarianism which themselves produced the death of high purpose by remaining too long rigid in the face of change. In one place or another the author heaps scorn on democracy in school life, on general education, projects, activity methods, and the application of psychology to education; he regrets the decline in corporal punishment, and wants a tougher attitude in teaching the 3 R's, and an end of this nonsense of trying to improve awareness and understanding by the synthesis of kindred subject fields; he has not one word to say about the influence of examinations and excessively high specialist standards on the individual development of adolescents; large classes seem to worry him little, and the educational needs of the less-able academically pass him by. If we add together all Mr. Bantock includes in his book (remarkably discordant with itself) and the number of equally remarkable omissions, we get a picture of a man trying to stand on both sides of the fence at once while simultaneously sitting on the fence in between and, furthermore, wholly oblivious to his unstable position because he is gazing at the stars through a glass smoky with his private prejudices. It is good to gaze at the stars; education is too pedestrian, too mechanical, too easily satisfied with poor cultural standards. But these weaknesses will not be cured by inconsistency and confusion but by clarity of thought and integration of facts and aims.

## ENGLISH NEW EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT, 1952

1952 has been an important year in the history of the E.N.E.F., many of whose members have been active in a number of fields. The office has been constantly sustained by a hard-working Council. There are solid reasons for expressing gratitude to the elected and co-opted members of that body and its sub-committees for their enthusiastic work for the Section's welfare. I should like also to record my appreciation of the devoted work of the office staff.

### Education Committee

The Education Committee has once again provided the driving force required to implement the general policy approved by the Council. It was honoured by the invitation extended to its Chairman, Mr. James Hemming, to visit South Africa to lecture to the N.E.F. there. It has continued its enquiry into educational standards,

calling from time to time on the services of non-committee members expert in different branches of education. The results of these meetings will be made public in a special number of *The New Era* to be published in the Spring, and in subsequent articles in that magazine. There is reason to believe that the publication of these papers will coincide with, or perhaps slightly anticipate, a national enquiry into standards in education.

As forecast in the 1951 Report, a special Industrial number of *The New Era* appeared in May. It met with widespread approval, and helped bring our work to the notice of industrialists.

The December issue of *The New Era* contained the working papers and Agenda prepared by an *ad hoc* committee of the English Section which was called together, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Ben Morris, to answer a request from Unesco to International N.E.F. Headquarters for help in



preparing for the 1952 Unesco Regional Conference on *Education and the Mental Health of Children in Europe*. We are additionally indebted to Mr. Morris for going to Paris on behalf of the Fellowship to give evidence on, and amplify, the working papers we had submitted. Lest it be thought that membership of such committees is confined to persons in the London area, it should be said that this committee consisted of members coming from as far away as Leicestershire, Worcestershire, and Yorkshire, as well as from the Home Counties. This same committee also discussed the draft Report of the psychiatrist and psychologist responsible for the enquiry into Attitude Change in Teachers, before the final version was submitted to Unesco. Another *ad hoc* committee, again with representation outside the Home Counties, has been responsible for steering the pilot Case History Project carried out by teacher members in widely spaced schools in England. The object of this project, adumbrated in last year's Report, was to investigate the effects on the intellectual and emotional adjustment of children caused by changes in the learning situation and social climate in school. A pilot scheme was necessary not only to test the adequacy of the research material issued to participants, but to give the research worker in charge an opportunity of analysing, and drawing conclusions from, the replies received.

The results of this trial have been collated in a short but comprehensive report. They show that few changes are required in the research material, and, in addition to giving valuable information about the classroom situation as it affects children, they provide a striking picture of the kind of problems that worry teachers in their daily contacts with their pupils. The steering committee will meet later this week to discuss the next stage in this investigation, which it is hoped ultimately to launch on an international scale. It is, I think, an example of one of the strengths of the E.N.E.F. that, thanks to the composition of its membership, it has been able in this case, as in so many others, to draw into the investigation many teachers not hitherto associated with the Fellowship, thus enriching its own work as well as giving the investigation a statistical validity it might not have had were it confined to the self-selected group which its membership constitutes.

This is a fitting point at which to pay tribute to our good friends on the Council of Education Services. Thanks to their support, it has been possible for International N.E.F. to finance the pilot scheme. We also have received £50 from Education Services, to meet the English Section's expenses connected with the investigation, as well as an administration grant of £75. Continued

support on this scale is substantial evidence of the goodwill existing between Education Services and the E.N.E.F.

### International Work

Much of what I have already said goes to show that the year has once again been marked by the active participation of members in the international work of the Fellowship. I pass now to other examples of this. On three occasions English Section members have addressed International Teas organized jointly by N.E.F. and E.N.E.F. Miss D. Aickman spoke of her experiences as Educational Adviser in Malaya; Mr. David Jordan gave an account, illustrated by excellent slides, of his Australian lecture tour; and Mr. Hemming described education as he found it in South Africa. The Section has been represented at the Austrian Conference organized by Professor Fadrus, partly with the intention of reviving the Austrian Section of the N.E.F., as well as at the German Section Conference at Weilburg; and members have also attended the Conference of Internationally Minded Schools held in Holland last August. Several schools in which members serve have supported Kees Boeke's International Plan, whereby schools of many countries are linked together in an exchange of materials. It has been my privilege to visit N.E.F. Sections in Germany, Holland, and Scandinavia. On all these occasions there have been eager questions about what the English Section is doing, a lively interest in its work, and a heart-warming sense of the fellowship that exists between the national sections. This interest and sense of intimacy are further manifested by the many visitors from abroad who come to 1 Park Crescent in search of information about English Schools. They owe much to the response of E.N.E.F. members to requests for interviews and visits. Our Council has been asked by the Federal Council of the N.E.F. in Australia to organize in England a lecture tour for Dominion educators in 1954. Efforts are being made to solve the financial difficulties of such a venture.

### Conferences

Two regional conferences and one national conference were held during the year. The first of the regional conferences, the general title of which is AIMS AND PREJUDICES IN EDUCATION, was a residential conference held at Belstead House, Ipswich, during a week-end in March, the theme being *The Primary-Secondary Transfer*. The second was a day conference held in Cambridge last October, when the theme was *General Mathematics in School*. Both conferences have been fully reported in *The New Era*; both were



organized by local members, Headquarters being concerned only in arranging for speakers and issuing invitations, almost entirely on suggestions made locally; both were marked by the presence of members representing an almost complete cross-section of the educational field; both were modestly successful financially, and very successful in arousing local interest in the E.N.E.F. It is proposed to continue this series of regional conferences in 1953.

In the summer, our conference held at Coventry proved to be an international conference in miniature. It was run on the same lines as the International Conference held at Chichester in 1951, and was much enlivened by the presence of members from six overseas countries. It was well supported, much enjoyed, and exceedingly valuable as a preparation for the International Conference to be held in Denmark in August, 1953. It has been briefly reported in *The New Era*; a fuller account under the title 'Prelude to Denmark' will appear in an early number.

### Branches

Among our Branches, Cambridge, Derby, Leicester, and the London Branch—previously known as the Kingsway Branch—have been the most active. All have contrived interesting programmes. On the other hand, St. Albans and Torbay Branches have found so little local support that they have decided to close down. Our Council is most anxious that the hard-working officers and committees of Branches which find dwindling local support should realize that this lack of interest in public meetings is the common experience of almost all those organizing educational meetings in England to-day. Last year's Annual Meeting called for more small meetings and conferences. The London Branch has tested the demand for these in London, first by holding a meeting at the College of Preceptors to enable members to meet our new President, Dr. G. B. Jeffery, who spoke on Education in West Africa; and later, by inaugurating a series of meetings on 'Education in Other Countries'. Well-qualified speakers have lectured on Denmark and on Poland. In all these cases it has been found impossible to provide an audience commensurate with the occasion. It is evident that a new pattern of interest—the informal study group or discussion group—is appearing. Our Mid-Bucks. group and the North-West London group are typical N.E.F. examples. Members are brought together in fellowship for an occasion in which all can participate. Our Council feel that this kind of organization of E.N.E.F. meetings is capable of wide extension; that it is a potential attraction to new members; that it may have a special value

if related to Teacher Training Colleges. The member whose suggestion it was that groups might be developed round Training Colleges, is experimenting with the formation of such a group, the College being its focal point. The results of this endeavour should soon be apparent, and if successful will be made known to all our members. During the year it has proved possible to visit more Teacher Training Colleges than in the past, to lecture to students about the work of the E.N.E.F. This visiting has been shared by the Officers and Secretary.

### Home and School

For the extension of our influence a recent decision of the Council has a special significance. In the 1930's, when the promotion of parent-teacher co-operation began to be a task in itself, there was created out of the N.E.F. a new body, The Home and School Council, to further the formation of Parent-Teacher Associations, and to publish educational literature calculated to help parents and teachers to a clearer recognition of the problems of child development which they had respectively, and in conjunction, to handle. To-day, the formation of P.T.A.'s needs no, or but little, encouragement. It is rapid, almost too rapid. The educational guidance of parent and teacher, however, grows in importance. New knowledge, and new conceptions of the rôle of school and home, teacher and parent, need constant evaluation, explanation, application. From the beginning of 1953 this work becomes once again the responsibility of the E.N.E.F. at the request of the Home and School Council, which has ceased to exist. A Home and School sub-committee of the E.N.E.F. Education Committee will guide this work. Among the assets handed over to us are office furniture, small stocks of literature, and the publication rights of two best-sellers—*Advances in Understanding the Child* and *Advances in Understanding the Adolescent*. We hope also to retain the affiliation of a number of P.T.A.'s formerly linked to the Home and School Council, and the support of some of its individual Associate Members. We inherit no liabilities. Amongst the immediate tasks of the new sub-committee will be the completion of a book, planned some time ago, dealing with adults, and at present bearing the title *Advances in Understanding Ourselves*. All this opens to us new opportunities of service and expansion.

### Finance

In conclusion, I turn now to finance. In the current year, we have once more been fortunate in receiving a grant of £250 from the Ministry of Education. Our position is still precarious. If there is any virtue in living dangerously, we are



certainly a very virtuous organization. We would all, I hope, wish to reward virtue. I am pleased to say that a method, painless to our members, is ready to hand. Here it is—a Form of Agreement for a Seven Year Covenant. All you have to do is to complete it. The test Covenants which we submitted this year to the Chief Inspector of Taxes have been accepted, and we have received repayment of tax in respect of them. At the present rate of taxation, this means that for every 25s. members pay in subscription, we receive from the Inland Revenue £1 2s. 7d.—provided it is a covenanted subscription, and provided the Covenanter pays income tax at the standard rate. I would emphasize that this costs the Covenanter

nothing, and it nearly doubles the value of his subscription. He is only committed to paying the covenanted sum for seven years, or until death, if that should unhappily occur before the seven years are up.

I believe that 1953 holds great opportunities for the E.N.E.F. I trust that members will ensure that they are not missed through lack of funds, that they will join the ranks of the Covenanters, and help to make Coronation Year as memorable for the Fellowship as it undoubtedly will be for the nation. For it is not the new tasks only that face us. Everywhere New Education and its ideals are coming under attack. We must be strong and vigorous in reply.

### Pioneers of British Industry.

F. George Kay, F.R.S.A. (Rockliff. 25/-).

This book is most opportune. 1953 will inevitably be a year in which we in Britain review our national self-consciousness. Where are we now? What have we been? What next? Nor can this searching for a new perspective be a mere casual exercise. We are in real need of an informed and intelligent reassessment of ourselves. Furthermore, I suggest that it is time we stopped being ashamed of the geographical and historical good fortune that enabled us to romp ahead of the rest of mankind in technical advance during the nineteenth century. We need to look at our past objectively as the background to the present. The value of *Pioneers of British Industry* is that it helps us to do this by providing in concise form the essential material about the lives and struggles of those many men of inventive enterprise whose unquenchable determination was at the back of the industrial revolution and has kept technical progress running fast ever since. The book is, one must hasten to add, very much more than a symposium of potted biographies; its many features are happily woven into a single thesis, telling of the great upsurge of material creativeness with a humanity and a wealth of fact that bring us fresh insight and understanding. We catch, as we read, the excitement of watching men advance in conquest of their material environment. Terrible indeed were the immediate social consequences of the rapid shattering of culture by technical change, but 'like bright metal on a sullen ground' human achievement shines through it all—we sense the wonder of it; the pathos, too, of those who strove without success or died unrecognized, like poor Friese Greene, the pauper founder of a millionaire industry. Mr. Kay captures the

## Book Review

heroic content of this great, squalid age of material achievement.

A particularly valuable feature of this book is that it shows how men must 'lend out their brains to each other' in order ultimately to overcome the problems that challenge them. The weakness of much biographical material is that it focuses the spotlight of attention so strongly on its heroes that we are given the impression that humanity goes forward on the sudden bright ideas of a chosen few. Mr. Kay avoids this. By the breadth of his approach he reveals the team-work in all invention. We see that a transforming invention develops almost organically, attaining its mature form from the impact of innumerable contributions. This does not belittle the achievement of a Faraday but shows that even such a giant must stand on the shoulders of lesser men and depend on others to carry through his brilliant innovations to the stage of practical usefulness.

The organic element in invention is the better demonstrated by relating new discovery to original method both through pictures—of which there is an excellent selection—and through comments in the text. For example, Dunlop's invention of the pneumatic tyre is set in perspective against the age-old problem of haulage. The relationship of invention to society's changing needs is also brought out: the electric lamp came into being as much because the modern world must have good lighting as because work on vacua and the generation of electricity paved the way for the inventions of Swan and Edison.

As educational material, *Pioneers of British Industry* is first class. It is an ideal background book for the Sixth Form specialist and the teacher in training. Our civilization itself is to-day in some jeopardy because too wide a cleft exists between Science

and Arts in higher education and also because many who take up key positions in our society never learn to value correctly the industry upon which the status and stability of their lives ultimately depend. *Pioneers of British Industry* should be widely used to help heal these rifts. More particularly, the book will find a certain welcome with all Social Science students, whether following diploma or degree courses. One can warmly welcome it to politicians also. The book is essentially optimistic in flavour; one cannot read of so much creativeness without feeling heartened about the potentialities of our human resources. Yet, as Sir Norman Kipping warns in his foreword, potentialities will not develop unless they have their chance. The last century was wildly, brutally opportunist. Things boomed, though with an indifference to social justice no longer tolerable. Things can go on booming; we need that they shall. But, if they are to do so, our developing welfare democracy must plan to give innovation plenty of elbow room. Officialdom is cautious by nature. We have, therefore, to find a way of assuring a sufficient element of daring in our planned society.

The whole matter needs very careful thought. Mr. Kay's material informs and provokes such thinking.

James Hemming

Reviews of the following books have been held over through lack of space but will appear in the March issue:—

**The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Child** (Vols. VI and VII) (*Imago Publishing Co.*) 42s. ea.  
**Twins**, Dorothy Burlingham

(*Imago Publishing Co.*) 35s.

**Studies and Impressions** (University of London Institute of Education) (*Evans Bros.*) 15s.  
**Good Company**, Mary Field

(*Longmans Green*) 12s. 6d.

**The Grammar of Music**, Hilda Hunter

(*Dennis Dobson*) 6s.

**Melody Writing and Analysis**, Annie Warburton

(*Longmans Green*) 9s. 6d.

**My History of Music**, Irene Gass (*Evans*) 7s. 6d.

**Secondary School Entrance Examinations**, A. F. Watts, D. A. Pidgeon and A. Yates (*Newnes, for National Foundation for Educational Research*) 3s. 6d.



# Directory of Schools

## ABBOTSHOLME SCHOOL DERBYSHIRE

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Several scholarships are offered on the results of entrance tests held at the end of March.

Prospectus and details of admission procedure and entrance scholarships may be obtained from the Headmaster.

## DARTINGTON HALL TOTNES

DEVON

Headmaster : W. B. CURRY, M.A., B.Sc.

A co-educational boarding school for boys and girls from 7-18 in the centre of a 2,000 acre estate engaged in the scientific development of rural industries. The school gives to Arts and Crafts, Dance, Drama and Music the special attention customary in progressive schools, and combines a modern outlook which is non-sectarian and international with a free and informal atmosphere. It aims to establish the high intellectual and academic standards of the best traditional schools.

Fees: £210-£260 per annum.

Scholarships are sometimes available, and further information about these may be obtained from the Headmaster.

## KILQUHANITY HOUSE CASTLE DOUGLAS

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Established in 1940, Kilquhanity House frankly owes its inception to the work of A. S. Neill, who now considers it in the direct line of his own school and that of Homer Lane. It does not, however, cater for problem children. In practice there is an attempt to combine the traditional thoroughness of Scottish education with self-government for the pupils. Activity methods are used throughout, and the teaching staff is qualified to the standards demanded by the Scottish Education Department, which inspects the school. There is ample opportunity for practice in all the creative arts. A small mixed farm is a fundamental part—as distinct from an adjunct—of the school. The diet is on food reform lines, though children do not require to be vegetarian.

Fees : £150-£180 PER ANNUM

Headmaster : J. M. AITKENHEAD, M.A. (Hons.), Ed.B

## BEDALES SCHOOL

PETERSFIELD HANTS (Founded 1893)

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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## THE GOOD INFANT SCHOOL<sup>1</sup>

E. R. Boyce

IN these papers I cannot hope to give experienced teachers any fresh information. My aim is not to instruct but to think aloud with you in an attempt to clarify our minds about modern methods of teaching in Infant Schools. In the process, let us hope that we find some satisfactory and sound basis which will justify the work we are doing and which will enable us to go forward with still greater confidence and faith.

Do you feel as confused as I do when administrators and inspectors describe a school as 'formal but good'? Can a formal Infant School be 'good' for children? And do you have misgivings when teachers say that 'we do activities but we don't let them interfere with the three R's'? Do you feel outraged when parents and others sneer at 'activity schools' and imply that no good can come of them? Yet are you not cautious when young teachers assume that because they 'do activities', they have no more to learn about teaching? You may even have moments of wondering if you are right to believe in humanity in school; in freedom; in the all-importance of child development. So let us begin by attempting to assess, to recognize, the good Infant School.

I suggest that this recognition comes first through the vitality that we feel as soon as we approach the building. Vitality means life, liveliness, eagerness. The vitality of the life within a good Infant School, is evident already in the playground. The washing flaps on the line, a child shakes out a duster, someone is scrubbing down a table. There are many signs of life even on the asphalt. Growing things flourish, even though they may be in boxes. A child runs across the playground with that delicious grace of hop, skip, twist and the cheerful greeting, 'ello'.

Inside the school door, liveliness increases. Children are 'doing the milk', filling kettles and water jugs, calling out to a friend to 'open the door for us'. They are gossiping in the cloak-room, skipping along the corridors, playing in the

hall. There seems a good life for children going on. They are natural, purposeful and friendly—living in a place where they belong.

The environment of the good school lives too. Living suggests movement and change, not merely beautifully arranged nature tables, pictures on the wall and flowers on the sills. A well-equipped school may be a dead place, and is no good to children unless they themselves bring the equipment to life by using it for their own ends. There are delightful nature tables that have never been fingered, messed about or managed by children; notices that haven't been read by children since the day they were put up, pictures that are in the same place year in and year out; toys that are too clean for any but the most diffident handling. Everywhere and at all times, one should meet the interplay between children and environment. It is by way of things which they can change, arrange, re-arrange and order that children provide themselves with learning situations, problems, solutions, experiments and discoveries. If they are to do so, they must be quite sure of their teacher's permission. A generous attitude towards their curiosity must be expressed in our sympathetic interest in their investigations and inventions. Children in a good Infant School *know* that they can approach eagerly, handle and use freely. And because they grow and their interests change, the living background for learning changes and develops too. A static environment means a formal school.

Then, the teachers. We recognize their vitality, first by their friendly relations with the children, their capacity for sharing and their natural behaviour; and, secondly, by their preoccupation

<sup>1</sup> The substance of lectures given to members of the Nursery School Association, 1952. Miss Boyce will continue this series in the June, October and December numbers of *The New Era*, dealing with the following:

The relation between work and play. How far the Infant School is responsible for the learning and practice of the basic skills. The decline in the art of teaching the three R's to young children. Does the environment replace the lessons? Should we instruct the young? If so, how? What can they use? What do they need? An examination of apparatus, devices, games, individual work. Summary—the good Infant School is...



with the living instead of the mechanical aspects of school life. It is possible to be so engrossed in methods of teaching reading and the making of apparatus that the enjoyment of sharing books with the children and delight in their discoveries of life is by-passed altogether. Sharing the adventures of lively schoolchildren actually gives life and buoyancy to their teachers.

Besides vitality, I suggest that we look for *quality* in the life of Infant Schools. Vitality may include quality, which is felt as depth and richness of experience; as harmony and stability in living; as sincerity and humanity emanating from the teachers. It is shown in the children's ease and confidence of movement. This does not mean that they walk rather than skip and run, but that they move with the degree of physical steadiness natural to their level of development. It is shown also by their approach to adults, known and strange; by their assumption that all within the school walls are mutually helpful. This quality is also apparent in the leisurely, relaxed tempo and the absence of nervous tensions expressed in shoulder-hunching, fist-clenching, nose-picking and hair-twiddling. There are no taut vocal chords and breathless voices, and hardly a nail biter. While the children are alert, there are no signs of restlessness.

These signs of quality denote an emotional easiness on the part of teachers and children. But this does not mean that there are no bad tempers, no opposition to adults, no aggression. It is highly important to distinguish between the quiet that results from adult demands that children should show only their positive feelings (called 'behaving nicely'), and the deep quality which meets one when the children are accepted as, and allowed to be, themselves. The apparent peace of the first is brittle, painful, lacking in all quality; the children are dependent and apprehensive. Where there is quality, there is satisfaction. This is the heart of the matter. In a good Infant School, children are alive and vital, and deeply *satisfied*. What does this mean? They have strivings, desires and needs, that change with growth, and that can make for good adjustment to the adult world. They are most successful, venturesome, well behaved and happiest when these needs are satisfied. But while there are general needs of all children, there are needs of certain ages at particular levels of growth. There are needs of different groups of children and also

needs of individuals. A good Infant School satisfies these needs while the children are in school. The physical needs of fresh air, sunlight, rest, food movement are the school's responsibility as well as the parents'; open-air life, clean windows that open and let in the sunlight, rest for those who need it. Whether or not there are 'dinner helpers' and 'cooked meals centres', it is the responsibility of the teachers to insist on good, suitable food, special arrangements for newcomers, sympathetic handling of eating troubles, attention to individual requirements. Why should we bother about such apparently uneducational matters? Because we are responsible for the development and care of every child.

Then teachers simply cannot ignore the need for freedom to move about naturally. Cramped school life means cramped, unused muscles, strain, nervous tension, troublesome behaviour, and limited learning. Whatever the conditions, teachers have to plan for movement. The more congested the classroom, the more respectable the neighbourhood, the greater the need. No school is good unless the children are physically free.

Then there are the needs of their growing personalities. The 'I' within the body must have security. In school, this means belonging, being at home, welcome. At five, it means belonging to your teacher and to the home-classroom. Later on, it includes acceptance by other children. Security for them all means being sure of their teacher, not only of her friendliness but of her control. There is the world of difference between the proud remark of a six-year-old, 'She (the teacher) lets me do what I want to', and the dissatisfied, anxious complaint of another child of the same age in a different school, 'She doesn't *care* what I do.' They all want to be sure that their teacher is stronger than they are, that she is able to protect them from themselves and from each other; that she has everything under control.

They want pattern in their school lives, too. Without this, they are uneasy and feel lost. Knowing where things are, knowing clearly what is and what is not allowed, knowing roughly what comes next, knowing about serious changes in advance. Disorder within the classroom and indecision on the part of the teacher is bad for them. A day without pattern is bad, too. They cannot make use of long stretches of freedom; the responsibility is too much for them. It would



be a great misfortune if advocates of 'free days' were taken seriously. Anxiety would increase, feelings of insecurity would deepen and mental health would be impaired. A good Infant School provides a loosely patterned school day which can be adapted to the needs of different classes, groups and individuals.

Every child must also feel that he is approved of because he can do things. It is most necessary for them all to achieve self-respect, partly through their teacher's attitude of liking and approving and partly through the feeling of worthiness that comes from daily success of all kinds in practical and social matters. Every day, in scores of ways, a good school allows every child to build up the picture of 'I am someone who can do things.' It is a tragedy when teachers can only reckon success in terms of the three R's. It is an even greater tragedy when this success is reckoned in relation to an unrealistic standard of attainment and rewarded by stars on wall charts. The good Infant School finds it easy enough to let every child, even in classes of fifty, experience achievement which satisfies them on every school day.

Children need the companionship of other children. They are often lonely in formal classes, although they are surrounded on all sides by children of their own age. They badly need to talk; and they have a great desire to master the intricacies of the adults' world which surrounds them. In this connection, too, they feel the need to do what adults require of them although they do not always know how to do it. While they are in the Infant School, many of them desire to become skilled in the various ways approved of by grown-ups. As they mature they show the first signs of self criticism and they appeal for help which will repair their feelings of inadequacy. From being unable to put up with blame and disapproval, they grow strong enough to bear failure, but seek for more help in order to conform more successfully.

These are general needs of all children. In different districts, the Infant School has to satisfy the special needs of particular groups, e.g. the middle-class group with its more developed sense of information, sometimes a more precocious desire for books. In another district, there is a greater need to stimulate speech, perhaps a greater need to challenge reading interests, and often a greater need for physical care. Then there are individual needs of all kinds. Every teacher

knows the children who want more attention than others, those who want more assurance, those who need special playthings, those who want greater opportunities for success.

Let us return to the question of quality. We have decided that the intangible we call quality is really the sense of satisfaction that pervades the school. Is there a vitality without quality, without this satisfaction? Yes, it exists in a large number of schools. And the remedy? To organize Infant Schools on the basis of the needs of the children who attend them. Programmes, methods, curricula, equipment—the entire paraphernalia of school organization can be built up on this basis. The result will be vitality and quality. And what about the education? This is our next suggestion, viz., that the good Infant School can be recognized by the effectiveness of the education it provides.

Books suggested (in the N.S.A. Library):  
*Psychological Aspects of Child Development*, Isaacs (Evans).  
*Growth and Development of the Young Child*, Rand, Sweeney, Lee Vincent (N.Y.).

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# SOME THOUGHTS ON ARITHMETIC AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

*D. M. Alderson, of Park Infants' School, Doncaster*

MANY of us who are infants' teachers believe that the life in our schools should be based on the needs and interests of the children, and we therefore try to organize our schools so that the children can have the fullest opportunity for what we call 'satisfying activity in a stimulating environment'. It is, perhaps, in our individual interpretations of 'satisfying activity' and in our different ideas of what constitutes a 'stimulating environment' that our schools show the greatest variation; these are not really, however, matters for conjecture but for observation, and teachers should be constantly seeking to discover children's true needs and interests. This is the only way in which we can give life and meaning to some of the terms we use in professing our beliefs.

In the school in which I teach we tried to find out more about the needs of individual children through living with them rather than merely teaching them, and in doing so we discovered that we were building up an entirely new conception of what a school should be. We began to realize that there was a noticeable growth of feeling in the community and we discovered that, in an environment where there is full scope for a sincere expression of feeling, new attitudes to learning are created. As we lived and shared the experiences of the children, we realized that each experience of each child was in itself something new and that we must deal with such an experience as it arose, making our own contribution at the appropriate time.

It became no longer feasible to plan a scheme of work beforehand, since the activity of the children was not something we could predict in a weekly forecast and attempt to carry out according to a pre-conceived plan. Indeed, as our new conception of a school began to take shape, we found that many of our 'traditional' ideas of planning and many of our former ways of recording progress had to be discarded; we realized, too, that we were gradually building up a set of values that were partly new, particularly in our changing attitude to the Arithmetic or Number teaching in our school.

Formerly, we had on our time-tables periods

labelled 'Number Activities'. These were planned by us and based upon what we thought were the interests of the children. We provided a series of organized practical activities in which the children weighed, measured and shopped in a limited way, according to instructions. These activities were supplemented by a graded scheme worked out in a 'logical' sequence. It began by introducing pieces of apparatus for associating and number group with the symbol, and continued through the various stages of addition, subtraction, composition, multiplication and division of these numbers with the aid of attractive, well-made counting apparatus. The child worked through a number of sum cards at each stage, and his progress was recorded as he completed each set of cards.

There are a number of comments one could make about various aspects of such a scheme, which had been planned with considerable thought and good intention; there are, too, several observations one would wish to make about the various reasons which led us to query the ultimate values of our number teaching as it was. These do not, however, come easily within the scope of a short article. I can only say here that this changing attitude was a gradual process born out of a developing awareness of the real needs of children. As I, myself, became more aware, I found that I was beginning to ask myself certain questions such as:

'Does the *teaching* of Number serve any purpose and if so, what is that purpose?'

'What use is Number knowledge in everyday life?'

'Does the Number teaching I am attempting bear any relation to the day-to-day living of the children?'

'Does it mean anything to the children?'

Through asking myself simple, fundamental questions such as these and through allowing the answers to them to arise from the observations I had made on the children in my class, I realized that much of my own well-meant, well-planned number teaching was not only misdirected but often divorced from the life of the child. I had been thinking of Arithmetic (or Number) as a



subject and unwittingly most of the emphasis had been laid on the teaching of the subject rather than on the integrated growth of the child. I believe that many of us err in a similar way over the teaching of reading and music; we often introduce the children to the technique of these 'subjects' before they have any real interest in them. We may have achieved certain external results but I think that the children gained little beyond a certain ability to juggle with numbers, words and notes; I do not think that this way of teaching them helps them to form clear concepts of numerical meanings and values, to read books for content and ideas or to love music and create melodies.

So I schooled myself to think of number experiences more in relation to the child's development as a whole person. After all, the child comes into contact with Number in a variety of natural situations throughout the day: he gets up, sets off for school, has his meals and goes to bed at stated times; he eats a specific number of sweets, gives so many away, has so many remaining; he sees his mother cut an apple into halves, giving one to him and the other to his sister; he goes shopping with his mother and hears her ask for 'two pounds of sugar', 'half a pound of margarine' and sometimes sees the grocer weigh these quantities; he sees the bottle of milk and hears it referred to as 'a pint of milk'. Later he begins to count the number of times he can bounce his ball or skip without stopping. He counts the number of bricks needed to complete his tower and, even more important, he begins to *estimate* the number of bricks he will need for that purpose and to judge the length of a piece of wood needed for a boat he is constructing. He begins to notice numbers on cars and houses, on 'buses and on 'bus tickets.

These natural experiences of every child reappear in his play at home and at school. The five-year-old who is making a table, struggles to make four legs equal in size and to place them at the corners. Another five-year-old, playing in the Wendy House, sets the table with four plates, four spoons and four cups and saucers for four children; another who is making a lorry, on finishing his four wheels, carefully places two at the front and two at the rear; while another, who is making a truck, looks into the waste box for his four wheels and on finding one only says, 'I need another three wheels, please'.

As I observed these children and many others in similar situations, I realized that in this way they were forming a much clearer concept of the 'fourness of four' than they would have done from a card showing four dots and the figure '4'. Moreover, out of their own experience, number groupings were emerging in a spontaneous way. For example, in placing the wheels on the lorry we find the grouping  $2 + 2 = 4$  or  $2 \times 2 = 4$ ; in the problem met by the shortage of wheels for the truck the child is really understanding that ' $4 = 3 + 1$ '.

So it seemed clear to me that such number experiences, whether at home or at school, make a vital contribution to the social as well as to the intellectual growth of the child; through these experiences he finds out more about the world in which he lives. When I began to realize the full implications of these and similar experiences, I found myself becoming more aware of the many and varied situations in which individual children experience number in a meaningful and purposeful way during the course of an ordinary day. Perhaps it would be helpful, at this point, to quote briefly from our records. The teacher of the five-year group writes:

'To-day seven children came to the Milk Table at the same time and they realized that there was not enough room for them all to have their milk then. I said, "There are not enough chairs for all of you so some of you must wait until later. I wonder how many of you will have to wait?" The children began to count themselves and it did not take them long to find out that four of them could sit on the four chairs and that three of them must go away and come back later. Barrie said, "There are seven of us altogether so four and three make seven".'

In the records of the six-year group we find:

'This morning a piece of group work occurred quite spontaneously. Six boys took all the clay from the bin and began to depict Paul's birthday tea in clay. I did not see the actual model until it was almost completed but throughout the morning I was aware of their absorption and also of their co-operation as they discussed with each other various points about what they were making. All the boys in the group had been to Paul's birthday party some weeks before and this model consisted of the various cakes and jellies arranged on plates, of themselves playing games and finally a spectacular birthday cake. Paul



said to me, "Everything we have made is just like it was at my party except for the birthday cake. We all liked making candles so we decided to make a hundred candles." They had made a hundred candles between them and had arranged them in groups of ten. When this was done each boy in turn counted the hundred candles in tens, not once but several times, obviously savouring the experience.'

The following example describing the work of David, aged 6½, shows not only the beginnings of geometrical knowledge, but also evidence of his reasoning.

'David was making a rabbit hutch from an orange box. He made the framework for the door—half being blocked in and the other half open so that he could nail wire netting on to it. We had no wire netting in stock so, as he was anxious to continue, I suggested string as an alternative. He took some nails and a ruler. Using the ruler he carefully marked the place for each nail along the top and the bottom and then along the opposite sides. He explained to me that there must be the same distance between each nail and that the ones at the bottom must be exactly opposite the ones at the top just as those along the sides must be opposite. Then he said, "If the spaces between the top nails are the same as the spaces between the bottom nails then they will be opposite." When the nails were all carefully knocked in he made a good job of weaving the string in and out. Then he fixed on the door with two hinges (counting his screws in threes). On the following morning, however, I noticed that he was undoing all this careful work. He looked at me and said, "I'm afraid your idea of using string instead of wire netting won't work; you see, rabbits eat string!"'

If the environment is rich in material which is both satisfying to handle and suggestive of possibility, then the children will experiment, create and construct. Naturally, one includes in a stimulating environment a variety of material and equipment which is not only suitable to the interests of the children but which in itself presents problems and suggests possibilities. There is sand and water and many spoons and vessels of different sizes; scales and weights and many different commodities to be weighed in quantity. There are sets of stamps and 'bus tickets of all denominations. There are also collections of different kinds of articles suitable

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for buying and selling and boxes of money to use along with these home-made shops. There are simple recipes and all the equipment for baking and it is interesting to see the many and varied problems which arise and are solved when children are weighing and baking. Here is a typical situation in the six to seven-year group:

'Pat was baking chocolate buns; Christine, who was new to the School said "I wish I could bake but my Mummie won't believe me when I tell her we bake at this school and she won't let me bring any fats and sugar." Pat said "Well Christine, I've weighed all I need and there is some fat left. You can have that. Weigh it and then see if there is a recipe needing only that amount." Christine took Pat's surplus fat, weighed it and found it weighed one ounce. She looked through all the recipes and found that the one requiring the least fat still required two ounces. Judy said "You can still bake, Christine; you needn't make as many buns; make half as many and then you will only need one ounce of fat, but remember you will need only half of the other things, too."

'So Christine took the recipe and I showed her



how to make a new recipe using half the quantities. This being accomplished she proceeded with great satisfaction to make a smaller number of buns.'

In this way, it seems to me that the children will, at their own level, form number concepts which will help them considerably when later they come to deal with abstractions. It is interesting to notice the children who have really grasped a numerical idea in this way.

'Janet was using the water measures and setting problems for herself. She showed me the pint measure and then the half pint measure and said—"I don't need to see how many half pints make a pint. I know without filling them with water. It will be two because it always takes two halves to make a whole." Some time later she heard Elizabeth asking me for help. Elizabeth was trying to determine the cost of an envelope if they were sold at two for a penny. Janet looked up from her story-writing and said "They will cost a halfpenny each, Elizabeth, because *one* is half of *two* and a half of a *penny* is a *halfpenny*."

I felt that Janet had formed a clear concept of a half though I could not have recorded the various stages in the process of her doing so in the old traditional way of record-keeping.

It was about this time that I wrote in my record of six to seven-year-old children:

'There is at the present time an enthusiasm about measurement of all kinds. The children naturally stimulate each other's interest but many of them approach it in different ways. Barbara and Elizabeth began by making books about water measuring. They set their own problems such as finding the capacity of a variety of vessels in the classroom and later comparing one result with another. They made their own investigations and experiments and needed no help. Other children began to measure each other and various articles of equipment in the room.

'As the interest in measurement was so keen I mentioned it to the children, who had gathered together to listen to a story. I asked Barbara and several other children to show us their books and to tell us what they had found out. A spontaneous discussion followed and the children talked about the many different ways of measuring. They mentioned weighing, liquid measurement, length measurement, money and time;

they discussed why it was necessary to use these different kinds of measurement, by whom they were used and which measures were used for specific purposes. The children made some thoughtful observations, especially about the difference between a liquid and a solid. Then Christine suddenly said: "If you measured jelly when it was set you would weigh it but if you measured it before it was set you would need a pint measure".

'Immediately the other children began to mention other substances which could take both a liquid and a solid form and what action was required to make a solid into a liquid—and so on.

'On the following morning I noticed several children experimenting; they filled a half pint measure with water, then weighed it. Next they filled it, in turn, with flour, salt, clay and later oil. They recorded each weight and later compared it with the weight of the half pint of water. I must watch this spontaneous measurement and its recording carefully during the next few weeks for it seems to me to have something of a creative quality. The children are suggesting their own problems and carrying out their experiments with integrity of purpose and in their own way.'

These examples from our records are only a few chosen from many; through my increasing awareness of these and similar experiences I found that I was naturally and spontaneously putting the children into the way of seeing the number aspect of what they were doing and later, through their own interest, guiding them to a natural progression. Thus, I found, that number work was being done in a variety of ways. Some of the children were reading maps and determining the distances between certain towns by using two-inch, three-inch or five-inch scales; some were recording and adding up their cricket scores; several children regularly took stock of the baking and weighing materials and calculated how much had been used since the last stock-taking; following the death of King George the Sixth, Michael became interested in the lengths of the reigns of former monarchs. He asked me to give him a table showing the dates of all the kings and then he calculated the length of each reign and compared it with the length of the reign of George the Sixth. All the children used the number knowledge they already possessed and were acquiring new knowledge, through their own need and interest. For my own part, I found that I, their





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teacher, was building up a new teaching technique in the light of each new experience.

In conclusion it is perhaps relevant to make a brief reference to some of the questions which are not infrequently asked, particularly in relation to number work with young children. Amongst the most common of these are:

'How do you approach the three R's?'

'How soon do you begin formal work in Arithmetic?'

'What standards of attainment and what stage do you expect your children to reach by the time they are ready to leave the Infant school?'

Some of us who are concerned with Child Development feel that it is not easy to answer these questions precisely. This is partly because we have come to think of the Infant school as a happy and serene environment in which the process of growth is a continuous and integrated whole and therefore it is difficult to think of the life there in terms of a curriculum, of schemes of work and of separate subjects. Perhaps it is possible to suggest, however, that towards the end of their Infant school life the children will

have acquired a store of knowledge from a wide, quantitative experience of daily life. Their vocabulary should easily include the simple units of time, space and quantity and they should be able to make simple calculations for themselves. Often, at some stage during the last two terms in the Infant school, some of the children show a genuine interest in recording. This need to record their experiences in writing coincides with writing readiness and research interests in other directions. Thus we find the recording of number experiences shown in a variety of ways, the children's books frequently showing originality of expression and creative thought and effort as well as evidence of the solving of numerical problems. It is out of such recordings that the abstract sum may grow but, in general, I would say that the time for this to happen is at the very end of the Infant school life or preferably when the children enter the Junior school. It is here that they begin to learn through the spoken and written word as well as through experience, and it is at this stage that they need help in sorting out and classifying the vast amount of knowledge gained through experience in the Infant school.



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# SOME SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN A PLAY CENTRE

*Joyce Haworth, M.A., Lecturer in Education, University of Manchester, Organizer of Play Centres, Manchester University Settlement*

It has always been a policy of the Manchester University Settlement to cater for the young children of Ancoats as well as for the teen-age and adult groups, and in 1949 the Play Centre was reopened after post-war reorganization. The first essential was the provision of material suitable for different types of play and various age groups up to ten years.

Not all the materials were bought immediately, and many gifts were sent into the Settlement at Christmas and other times (the motor-car so provided has given dozens of boys endless pleasure since it was received).

It was soon found that quite young children were going to make use of the Centre, so a further supply of materials suitable for children between two and four years of age has been collected gradually, such as hammering boards, interlocking wooden trains, large-sized wooden jig-saw puzzles, bricks, etc.

Play Centre generally meets when the building is unoccupied by other groups and therefore has a reasonable amount of room at its disposal. Usually it occupies a large playroom, a small quiet room, available for reading and table-games and a woodwork room with benches. There is a large round hall with a stage, available on the ground floor, and recently there has been a tendency to use this hall for free-play as it is much lighter and larger than the basement playroom.

During the first two years no attempt was made to limit the numbers coming into the Centre, which meets after school on week-days and on Saturday mornings: the result was that the numbers increased rapidly to an average of 75 a night and frequently during the winter months reached the 90's. Since the Organizer has only students to help her, it was decided that if any standard of behaviour was to be hoped for or any adequate observation of the play made, the numbers must be limited drastically, and the maximum number is now 40 each evening. Already a marked improvement in play behaviour and a decrease in tension can be seen, and more time can be given to individual children, par-

ticularly to the affection- and attention-seekers, of which there are several.

The Play Centre was not planned for therapeutic work, but although it was organized on an assumption of the normality of the children, a certain number of disturbed children inevitably find their way into it. It is possible that the very free situation is in itself an attraction for this type of child. The extremely aggressive boy whose behaviour shows bullying, destructiveness and a refusal to accept authority, naturally feels that here is a situation in which he can express these tendencies freely. The attention-seeker, too, appears to find satisfaction through the presence of an adult who, although she may represent authority, is not unyielding authority, but has time to listen to the seemingly trivial chatter of the child, to hold her hand and to attempt to find an activity that will be of benefit and enjoyment—more time, at any rate, than the overworked mother and the teacher of the over-large class. It has been found that the Play Centre has had greater success with children of the latter category and with the withdrawn solitary child than with the aggressive 'problem' child. Quite clearly, it is not possible to allow a boy complete freedom for expression of his aggressive tendencies if by so doing he is going to interfere unduly with the activities of other children.

Example: John T., boy, 9 years 3 months, well-built handsome child—aggressive and difficult—later referred to the Child Guidance Clinic and accepted for treatment for emotional disturbance. John and his 'gang', a group of seven boys varying from 6 years 1 month to 10 years; playing at 'Cops and Robbers'. John in highly excitable state—face red and eyes staring—armed himself with wooden sword made in woodwork room by another boy—all seven boys rushing up and down corridors and through playroom in highly complicated game. John seizes hold of small girl 5 years old and says: 'You're a prisoner', ties hands together with skipping rope—child willing to co-operate. Boys now merged into one band and began to chase girls—most of girls seem to be enjoying the fun—wave of excitement sweeps over the Centre—suddenly John begins to hit all around him with sword—is asked not to do so as he is hurting others, glares and runs to other side of the room picking up a rope and trying to lasso a girl as he runs past. He catches the girl and pulls the rope so tight that she begins to cry—adult intervenes and suggests that play should be less rough. John turns to girl and says, 'I'll blind you when you get outside.



'I'll push your eyes in, I'll belt you when we're outside.' Turns, runs upstairs, slams the door shut and throws a stone at it.

This behaviour was typical of the boy and eventually he and his gang became so aggressive that the smaller children were becoming frightened and it was obvious that although this type of behaviour might be a means of releasing tension in the boy himself, it was unfair to the other children and could not be allowed to continue. Various activities were provided which it was hoped would supply substitute means of release, including the purchase of several buckets of mortar and tools for brick-laying, using old bricks that could be collected in the playground. This game was played with much enthusiasm for several weeks. A gang was organized for collecting the bricks and a workable sling made out of ropes and sticks constructed to bring them up from an area outside the playroom. Unfortunately although John took an active and very noisy part in the construction both of the sling and the walls which were to be part of a house, he kicked down all the work that had been done after Centre was closed. This happened so many times that the other boys became discouraged and the activity petered out.

Various other schemes were introduced, including a 'skittle alley' using bricks and old tins, football and woodwork, but none of these had any lasting interest for John and eventually when he became 10 years old he moved into the Boys' Club which caters for the boys from 10 to 14. (In other cases where it is felt that a child is benefiting from attending the Centre, the age limit is not adhered to.)

The above has been quoted as a typical example of how the problem child cannot settle into a community, and shows how difficult it is to carry out therapy in a situation which involves a large number of children of various ages.

One of the most interesting developments has been the group relationships established among the older children. During the first year, groups were very fluid and any that did form were usually under the domination of one child who assumed leadership by virtue of physical coercion, dominating personality, or ability to suggest interesting games and ideas for play. However, a child with a quiet approach and a sense of security (demonstrated by his ability to start his play and develop it without constant appeal to either an adult or other children for praise or help) would gradually draw round himself a stable group of children. The one who dominated merely by imposition of his personality retained only one or two 'faithful followers' and the remainder of the group was constantly shifting. As the Centre itself became more stable, a solid nucleus of regular members was built up who recognized the three simple rules that governed them:

- (a) Do not break toys on purpose.
- (b) Do not hurt anyone on purpose.
- (c) Help to leave the building tidy.

Stable groups within the total group began to establish themselves. The size of these groups varied from four to ten children and the more integrated were not dominated by one particular child.

It has been found that the more stable a group is and the less under the domination of one child, the more able is the group to accept the refusal of one or two of its members to join in any particular activity on occasion and to accept them back into the group when a more desirable activity is started. For many weeks a large group of girls acted on the stage a play based on the story of Aladdin. For several nights there was much argument about how many scenes there should be and who should play the various parts. Eventually the oldest girl appointed herself the producer-cum-stage manager, and the various parts were allocated. From then onwards, for nearly three months, this group took their dressing-up box on to the stage on arrival, dressed and acted the play every night. The version varied a little each day and scenes were cut out and others substituted, but if any child did not wish to play on any particular occasion the parts were shifted round or an unattached child was brought into the play for that evening. Sometimes boys would be invited to take the parts of Aladdin and the Wicked Uncle, the girls either directing the speeches and movements of their understudies, or going off to entirely different activities. *Aladdin* was eventually given before an audience which included the Lord Mayor, but it still retained many of the spontaneous impromptu speeches of the children.

An interesting aspect of this particular group was that it was made up of children from different schools and different religious denominations—Roman Catholic and Protestant—and within the Protestant group Church of England and Non-Conformist. After the very early months little or no comment was made about differing religious beliefs. At first, a few of the Catholic children would ask if the Organizer were a Catholic and if the other children were. The answer that all the people in the Settlement believed in God and Jesus Christ and tried to live in a way that would please them appeared to satisfy them, and recently a Catholic girl was heard to comment, 'We all believe in God and that is the important thing.' This unity between Catholic and Protestant children was most apparent when a Nativity



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play, with a cast of children from both churches, helped and supported by the parents, was given at Christmas.

After the performance of the Nativity play, which had been carefully prepared, with a good deal of adult help, interest in formal play-acting seemed to die down. The dressing-up clothes were just as popular but the plays enacted were short and took the form of spontaneous working out of imaginative play, e.g. dressing in long frocks and trains, putting on crowns and being 'princesses' going to a ball, meeting a 'prince' and marrying him. Frequently the 'princess' would then become the mother of a large family, would forget her former rank and go shopping, put her children to bed, spank them, and generally continue with the usual house-play activities. At times there would be a reversion to the formal play-acting and *Cinderella* was prepared, but this was only a half-hearted effort and was soon abandoned in favour of family play.

During the play period two or three different groups usually carried out different activities, sometimes imaginative play, sometimes games such as skittles or ball, or improvised games on

the climbing apparatus, or a smaller group, consisting of three or four children, would settle down to painting or clay-modelling, sewing or knitting, meanwhile discussing and comparing their work. The woodwork room was free for any child to use; here also three or four boys would very often decide to do woodwork together, going in at the same time and coming out together. It was found that these smaller groups were closely knit for the activity of the moment, although they might disband immediately the interest in the particular activity had waned. A group of children working with clay would be loth to let another child join in, even though there was both room and material. In the woodwork room three boys would jealously guard a fourth boy's tools, even though he had finished using them, if an outsider came into the room—e.g. if one boy had finished sawing the others would keep his saw, replying to any requests for it, 'That's Michael's saw, he's in our gang to-night.'

Towards very young children a much more tolerant attitude was usually taken. Pat: 'Let little Janet in—here's some clay, love'; Jackie: 'Look at little George, Miss—he's pinched my



hammer and is trying to hammer that nail' or 'Can that little 'un have a hammer? Isn't she funny?' This good-humoured consideration of the small child manifested itself in numerous ways. The basement playroom becomes very crowded at times, particularly as two billiard tables are permanently erected in it. One overcrowded evening four ten-year-old boys were swinging on the trapeze trying to find out who could go the highest; several two-year-olds were pushing wheelbarrows from one side of the room to the other. The biggest ten-year-old, a rather uncouth, rough lad, jumped off the trapeze when he saw the adult in charge and said, 'We've taken our boots off, Miss, in case we should kick a little one and then it wouldn't hurt them!' On another occasion a very tough lad was seen with a three-year-old holding his hand and patiently walking up and down three steps counting, 'One, two, three, down; one, two, three, up'. On seeing the adult he smiled and said, 'He just wants to go up and down the steps.'

The children are given a cup of cocoa in the middle of the play period. This is prepared and cleared away by different groups in rota and it is a subject which very often comes up for discussion in the Children's Committee meetings. Nearly always the comment is made: 'We'll send the little ones in first, then they can sit down and we'll be sure they get theirs.'

This Committee consists of eight children between seven and ten years of age and meets for a quarter of an hour after Centre on Wednesday evening. They discuss the general functioning of the Centre, anything unusual that has occurred during the week, and any ways in which certain things might be altered or improved. Suggestions for different activities can be brought forward and discussed. At one Committee meeting, the idea of having a library was first broached. The children elected a librarian and an assistant librarian; they were provided with a shelf in one of the cupboards, fifty-two books, sheets of paper and pencils. At this time a young librarian from a local library was helping on one evening a week in the Centre and, on request, talked to the 'librarians' and suggested ways in which they might organize their library. These were followed out, and finally the fifty-two books had ticket-pockets and tickets made for them, and the library was duly opened, with threats of fines for unpunctuality in returning books or for mishandling them.

The formation of the Committee, and the seriousness with which the members took it, was the result of a gradual growth of a sense of responsibility in the children. In the early stages a great many of them had no conception of loyalty or good social behaviour in this free situation. For many weeks toys and materials were stolen every evening, others were deliberately destroyed and damaged; the children were rough with each other and tried to use the adult in order to 'play-off' each other. Maureen: 'Miss! Miss! that boy's hit me across the face for nothing!' Joe: 'That tart coming into woodwork and taking my hammer' or Joe: 'I'm gaffer here—get out you—Miss, you said I'd to look after the tools.' It was quite impossible to lend anyone the keys for the various cupboards so that they might get out their own materials; not only were the shelves raided but the keys themselves were 'lost', to be used later for raids on the cupboards when the Centre was closed. Dolls were used as footballs by the boys despite the provision of balls; paints were used as ammunition by the girls when chasing the boys; and clay and dough were used indiscriminately for throwing at walls and ceilings and each other.

Gradually over the months a more orderly spirit began to prevail. It became a point of honour to borrow the keys in order to get a particular toy and to return them with the cupboard intact; to-day the keys are handed out to any child on request and are more often in the possession of some boy or girl than in that of the adult. This was achieved partly by the natural 'settling-down' process and partly by the refusal of the organizer to replace any material that was stolen. If a child complained that there were no balls, then the reply would be, 'The balls have all been taken away, so I am afraid that there will be no more.' The children gradually became aware that their stealing was depriving them of games and enjoyment in the Centre. Those children who did not steal but had not been unduly concerned about it became indignant when they found that toys and materials were not available and so the idea grew that it was undesirable to steal from a practical point of view. Later a few of the parents began to express definite views on their children's behaviour. One or two things were returned with messages of regret; one mother told her daughter: 'It's a shame to take things when so much is being done for you'; the child



repeated this to other children and gradually this conception of the unfairness of stealing from the Centre became general. Time will show whether this attitude will be extended outside the Centre.

This growing sense of loyalty and responsibility manifested itself in other ways. The toys were handled with more care and greater pride was shown in keeping them unbroken. Kathleen, eight years: 'We've had that doll a long time and it isn't broken yet.' John: 'I can mend that bed, I'll take it into woodwork.' (The mended article was often less usable after treatment than before!)

A great many of the children from this area are not accustomed to tidiness. Their lives are lived in a perpetual muddle and one of the most difficult problems has been to persuade them to leave the rooms tidy for other groups. This problem is not confined to the young children. The need for putting the toys away in the cupboard so that they can be taken out easily the next day is still not fully appreciated; most children feel they have done all they need if the toys have been thrown in anyhow and the cupboard locked so that they cannot be 'pinched'. The slight improvement shown in this direction has come about partly because groups of children have been allowed to help in the quarterly tidying up and clearing out of cupboards and have therefore taken a personal pride in their appearance, and partly by insisting that everything is put back in the same place. The toy cupboard is a very fascinating place and the temptation to search through boxes and unearth treasures is very great. At one time many of the children would empty boxes on to the floor and then wander off, leaving the contents still strewn about. It is only in isolated cases that this now happens; it is nearly always the difficult and aggressive child who ruthlessly throws toys, etc., on to the floor. In these cases it has been found that the best solution is for the organizer to start tidying away, making no comment, and then to ask the culprit who frequently returns to the scene of the crime, to help.

Since the formation of the Committee, the general tidiness has improved as it is a point that can be brought up for discussion. It has been found that a Committee member will be responsible for certain jobs, such as looking after the sewing materials, the woodwork tools, paints, etc.,

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but the child in charge must be changed at intervals for (a) he cannot sustain interest in one job for long, (b) other children can benefit by the experience of responsibility, (c) certain children do not react favourably to the power that is given to them. It is more satisfactory for the child to know that the job is for a limited time only, as it reduces the tension which arises if he knows that he is abusing power and is afraid that the cherished concession may be taken away.

We do not claim that the opportunities for play afforded these children are having remarkable effects upon their development. Most of the observations made are subjective and consequently it is impossible to maintain that certain developments recorded are entirely the result of the play situation. Nevertheless, it is suggested that freedom combined with security has helped these children to reach an awareness, however slight, of their responsibility to others who do not belong to the classroom or school situation, and to form group relationships which have been of value to them in their social and emotional development, particularly since their presence in the Centre is voluntary.



**Twins.** *A Study of Three Pairs of Identical Twins with 30 Charts.* Dorothy Burlingham. (Imago Publishing Co., Ltd., London, 35/-).

For those who are thinking of trying the experiment next time of being born twins, my advice is to choose parents who live near a library. Few parents would be able to afford to buy Mrs. Burlingham's book, yet they could enjoy following the fortunes of the three pairs of identical twins the details of whose development are faithfully and clearly set out in charts. Such charts are expensive to print but they are indispensable here, and Imago Publishing Co. is to be congratulated on a beautiful as well as a valuable production.

The study is a record of work done, and the comment, which is only half the book, is presumably intended for workers in the field, since certain terms are used in Mrs. Burlingham's personal conclusions, at the ends of chapters, that would be correctly understood only by those who know current psycho-analytic usage. I will return to this point later when I offer some criticisms.

Mrs. Burlingham has long been known to have a special interest in twins, not only in the three sets of identicals that are reported here. A companion book on non-identical twins will be eagerly awaited. In this volume by careful planning the masses of facts are laid out for our benefit, facts which were recorded at a time of maximum air-raids, largely by persons whose own relation to home and country had been so rudely disturbed that paralysis might have been excused. This is not mentioned in the book, except that there are inevitable references to bombs, air-raid shelters and separations attendant upon war.

Details in the daily lives of the children are presented in such a way, helped by three-colour printing, that one can follow the development of each child or of each pair without difficulty, and one soon gets to know the children quite well. It is perhaps best for the reader to start with the charts of the set of twins presented last, because these were already 3 years 7 months when they came under observation and one is on familiar ground right away, watching the development of positive and negative interpersonal relationships, and of the instinct life, and of the organization of defences against anxiety and intolerable internal conflict.

As an example, it is easy, from the charts, to pick out, following the appropriate colour and column, that Mary, at 3 years 11 months, took over a male rôle. At 4 she said 'I am Daddy.' At about this time, being

## Book Reviews

confronted with her daddy she hesitated, while Madge ran to meet him, and kissed him. This state of affairs was related to a subdued rôle that was being played by Madge. After Madge had been away ill, however, rôles became reversed, to some extent. It was then Madge who said, 'Daddy must not be killed.' This is only one of very many types of theme that could be studied from the charts by anyone who has limited opportunity for the study of actual twins in development, and in a controlled yet human environment. Many of the observations of these children remind one of those of Susan Isaacs, Piaget, Gesell; they are interesting but nowadays largely supplanted by direct observations made by students in practical work. Example: Madge (5·2), 'Will to-day be yesterday to-morrow?' as an example of the child's conception of time. This and other comparable observations have increased value because they are related to the emotional climate and the environmental setting (in this instance, the absence of Mary, the twin, because of illness).

Both the other sets of twins came to the Hampstead Nurseries at 4 months. Bill and Bert and also Bessie and Jessie had been evacuated with their mothers soon after birth. Both sets were fatherless. The observations of these, extending back to the early months, provide data that can only be excelled by complementary psycho-analytic studies, for the development of the theory of the emotional growth of human beings.

The first question that will be asked is: When did the twins become aware of each other? Bill and Bert began to take notice of each other at 7 months and Jessie and Bessie at 8 months. In each case there was a time-lag between the first recognition and mutual recognition. The onset of response to the mother was much earlier, but was difficult to sort out from a general response to being handled by the nurses who were also known to the infants. With this important qualifying comment, it could be said that both infants (Bill and Bert) took notice of the mother's visit from 4 months, the earliest time of observation. With Jessie and Bessie the response to the mother began several months before they responded to each other. At 4 months Jessie smiled at her mother, and at 7 months both she and Bessie had contact with her, by which I think is meant had formed a human relationship with her.

These details show up the lateness of the observable mutual response between the twins of these two sets,

and also have an interest apart altogether from the study of twinship. It is clear that those who were observing had no axe to grind, but were day by day making notes of what was to be seen and heard.

I give this sample to try to whet the appetite of the reader, so that the book will get properly read and used.

Mrs. Burlingham gradually shows that with twins there is not only the inborn likeness. Soon the twins begin to copy each other. They copy each other for various distinct reasons, for instance: to please themselves and to please their mother; to distract each other; because of a dependence of one on the other; because of identification, with one incorporating the other and so compulsively imitating; to strike a balance between having all or renouncing all, through fairness and the demand for fair treatment; and so on.

There is a unique opportunity in the twin relationship for team work, and Mrs. Burlingham has a comment to make on the light that a study of twinship may possibly throw on the origins of the gang, as for instance that of delinquents.

At 2·5 Jessie and Bessie were separated through illness. Bessie, when told to lie down, said, 'Me not Bessie, me Jessie' and lay down ordinarily when called Jessie. Mrs. Burlingham points out the identification with the lost love-object illustrated here and elsewhere in the material. My comment is that with twins the magical side of identification is facilitated, which means that the imaginative side can be by-passed, so that there is less of the depressive quality to the reaction, this latter depending on (imaginative) incorporation rather than on (magical) introjection. The result of the one is anxiety due to the destructive elements in the incorporation idea, and that of the other is simple possession by the unaltered love-object.

By way of criticism I would say that some of Mrs. Burlingham's conclusions are marred by the use of terms that have a limited public. For instance (p. 16): 'On the basis of the pleasure principle all babies respond to whatever gives them sensations of pleasure . . .' The term 'pleasure principle' belongs to a theoretical construct of Freud, and those who are familiar with the growth of psycho-analytic theory will understand what is meant. But the term adds nothing and makes Mrs. Burlingham's meaning liable to misunderstanding, especially as the paragraph ends with the phrase 'the desire to please à deux', in which pleasure is used in the ordinary way and not as a technical term with specific connotation. As a technical term it belongs to a period of theorizing in which the object-seeking element in early erotic



experience was being neglected in psycho-analytic writings, though (I believe) not in practice.

I could drag in other criticism of this sort but the fact remains that the book has real value, and it can be used as a source for the student, and an example for those who have detailed observations to present.

Mrs. Burlingham pays due respect to the idea of twins and the contrast that exists between being a twin and imagining being a twin. I think there is more to be said about the actual twin situation. For instance, by the time twins start to show they notice each other there has already been plenty of room for good or unsatisfactory emotional development. Mrs. Burlingham fully expounds the theory of the twin relationship in terms of interpersonal relationship and indeed as something profoundly affected by the satisfaction and the frustrating aspects of the ordinary triangular situation (parents and child), that is to say, the Oedipus complex. But twins are twins before they get as far as being whole human beings related to whole human beings. There is plenty of material in this book for a study of these very early matters.

It is right to make a start by studying twins as persons who have developed through these early stages (in which failure denotes a predisposition to insanity) to the stage of the Oedipus complex, in which failure spells neurosis.

But the early tasks of the infant seem to me to be understressed in this book, and yet they are probably relevant. By early tasks I refer to the following: the development of the sense of self as a unit, integration of the personality; the development of a sense of existing in the body, of occupying it all, no more, no less; also the gradual acceptance of the illusory nature of all emotional contact between persons, from which it follows that objective perception is only a relative term, referring to something that loses meaning as soon as it is out of step with the corresponding process of subjective apperception, or of creativity.

I know this is a very personal phrasing, but through it I can perhaps convey the idea that there are important things to be learned from twins that can help with the study of the roots of sanity and insanity. Probably it is once again psycho-analysis rather than direct observation that can give what is needed here. I have had two patients in long analysis who were twins, and in each case it was for a disturbance that was established prior to the stage of the Oedipus complex that my help was sought.

Mrs. Burlingham will easily support me when I stress the value of psycho-

analytic study that must go with and elucidate direct observation. I know she has had a great deal of experience of twins that is not referred to in this book.

This, which I have written by stretching my neck while standing on the platform that is her book, in no way modifies my opinion of the book, which is that it has no twin.

D. W. Winnicott

**Secondary School Entrance Examinations. Second Interim Report. National Foundation for Education Research, Publication No. 6. (Newnes, 3/6).**

This is an outstandingly thorough and clear report. Boldly set out at the beginning of the book is a summary of the contents. This states that the procedures now commonly used to allocate children to secondary schools are the best yet devised but shows the weaknesses in discriminating, through examinations, between children who are near the borderline for grammar school entrance. The difficulties are aggravated by the influence that coaching and practice can have on intelligence test scores. Important recommendations made in the summary include one that universal coach-

ing should not be adopted 'it is both undesirable and unnecessary', and another that borderline candidates should be educated along broadly similar lines whether they go to grammar or modern schools.

After the summary, the report gives details of investigations showing that increases in test scores can be produced by special preparation. Gains of ten points were not uncommon and there is a challenging reflection that differential coaching can change the position at the borderline of nearly 2 per cent. of the children examined; corresponding to about 5 per cent. of those actually entering grammar school where places are available for 15 per cent. of the age group.

Perhaps the most interesting research was that carried out by the Foundation's officers in an area where 749 children went on to the modern schools and five months later had a second attempt at passing grammar school entrance examinations while 266 children near in age remained in the primary schools for their second attempt. On this second test, the primary school children increased their scores, but the modern school children did less well than before. The report points out that there are two important issues to consider: 'One concerns the awarding of grammar school places to

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suitable over-age candidates in modern schools; the other concerns the validity of the assumption that the performance of children in modern objective tests will be unaffected by differences in the curricula they follow.' These are serious issues. They suggest that local education authorities are not genuinely offering a second chance for grammar school entrance if modern school children are being assessed by the same criteria as children still in primary schools. More serious is the threat to sound educational practice in primary schools if schools concentrate on preparation for standardized tests.

The suggestion that there should be further investigation of methods of assessment other than standardized tests is very welcome. In spite of its soothing introduction, the report inevitably challenges thought on school organization and curricula as well as on the value of tests, and now we look for guidance on observing the interplay of seemingly untestable attributes of personality and aspects of environment, including incentives, that help children to benefit from our varying forms of secondary education.

Joan Andrews

### **The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child. Volumes VI and VII.** (Imago Publishing Co. Ltd. 40/- each volume.)

Both these valuable volumes contain material which is of interest to all educators, especially those with a psycho-analytic orientation. My intention here is to refer to those articles which are specifically concerned with the learning processes.

#### **Volume VI**

Ernst Kris, in his *Opening Remarks on Psychoanalytic Child Psychology* (p. 9) gives a short historical survey of child psychology, and speaks of recent and 'more consistent attempts to supplement data gathered from analysis of children and adults by data of direct observation of the child during the early stages of development'. Observations by non-analytic observers, are valuable, he says, 'where growth and maturational processes are concerned', but research into the child's social adjustment, where the inevitable conflicts which arise during growth concern the child *in relation to his environment*, is valid only if it applies itself to the child and his environment as a whole. Much of the 'pure research' which many psychologists overstress is carried out in an unnatural and controlled environment. Dr. Kris mentions, for example, Gesell's pure research with co-twins, on which our knowledge of speech

development is largely based, and which was gained in an artificial environment, with the twins separated from each other and from their families, one twin's speech being 'stimulated', the other twin being placed with silent adults.

Dr. Kris points to many important gaps in our knowledge. Which educational methods, what mixture of indulgence and deprivation, are most efficacious; how soon is it possible to tell that the child's development is going astray; what therapy best fits each age level and its disturbances; how far do latency, puberty and adolescence help in themselves to counteract earlier deviations from the normal path of development? (In Volume VII, both Hartmann and Anna Freud suggest that in spite of early deprivations, later maturational and other processes may do much to repair the deficiency.)

Following Dr. Kris in Volume VI, Anna Freud gives some *Observations on Child Development* (p. 18) made at the residential Hampstead Nurseries in London during the last war. Here the staff were trained to be as objective as possible in their observations, while at the same time entering into strong relationships with the deprived children. These were, as expected, over-aggressive; but it became evident that because they lacked the emotional stimulus of a mother-relationship their aggressive drives were weaker, not stronger, than normal; and that it was only when the nurses were able to make good relationships with them, that the aggression could become fused with their love, and thus reduced to normal manifestations. Miss Freud quotes several more observations which throw new light on the development of the young child, and makes the important suggestion that 'social reactions, restraint of immediate gratification of instinct and an adaptation to the reality principle' can be acquired *either* under the influence of love for and identification with parents *or* in a community of children of the same age 'on the basis of the necessity of maintaining one's own status and existence in the group'. In another article (p. 127) Miss Freud and Miss Dann develop this theme, describing six refugee children observed for a year after their arrival in England at the age of three. They had been totally deprived of mother-love from birth or soon after, uprooted numerous times and sent finally to a concentration camp before coming to England. They were hypersensitive, restless, aggressive, difficult to handle, but neither defective delinquent nor psychotic. Yet for a long time after their arrival here they made no relationships with adults, and (except

in one case) had obviously never done so. The saving factor seemed to be their love for and identification with each other, apparently similar to that between twins. They were able to develop social attitudes and postpone gratifications apparently on this basis of group acceptance.

Berta Bornstein (p. 279) most usefully divides the fascinating period of latency into two halves, the first (which takes in the English first school year) from about five-and-a-half to eight, the second from eight to ten. During the first half she expects vacillation between obedience and rebellion, with a good deal of intermittent self-reproach and anxiety. She suggests that it is not until eight or thereabouts that the child's ego can cope comfortably with reality (as his instinctive drives become less demanding and his superego less rigid), and that he is really ready to be influenced by adults other than his parents, and by his companions in the group.

#### **Volume VII**

The newly recognized importance of direct observational data mentioned by Dr. Kris in Volume VI, is still more evident in Volume VII. There is first (p. 9) a theoretical discussion by Hartmann, Hoffer, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein and others of the interaction of ego and id which is so vital to the learning processes of the child. Anna Freud mentions two successful methods of teaching backward children: first, using only images and concepts which appeal directly to the child's emotions and thus stimulate his intellect, and second, enriching his emotional life so that he is better able, presumably, to control what intellectual apparatus he possesses. She says later, 'the children of our generation are brought up more leniently than before and, consequently, seem to take longer before they establish a firm ego structure.' (This perhaps links with Berta Bornstein's article in Volume VI, mentioned above, where the fluctuations of early latency are described, and with Christine Olden's article to be mentioned below.)

Dr. Gerald Pearson's *Learning Difficulties* (p. 322) is extremely valuable, though unfortunately he appears to have written hurriedly and revised carelessly. He contradicts himself at times, some of his categorical statements are questionable, his numerous sections overlap, and it is irritating to find, for example, supra-endowed children and their problems under 'Organic Disorders'! Nevertheless, it is a most helpful and comprehensive document. More than half the long article (Sections V and VI) is taken up with rarities, extremely disturbed children in need of prolonged psychi-



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atric help. The remaining sections, discussed below, describe the more frequent and less serious learning difficulties and their causes.

The effects of fatigue and illness ('Organic Disorders', p. 323) on children are fairly obvious. Less obvious is the vicious circle produced by intellectual deficiency: identification with parents is retarded, infantile anxieties are therefore prolonged because the child has not the capacity to deal with them, and this pressure of anxiety further weakens his progress, so that parents tend to become less fond and proud, which again holds him back. Treatment mainly consists, as Anna Freud also pointed out, in correcting this 'starvation for love'. Treatment of the supra-endowed child who tends to stop trying through boredom consists in 'grading with children of equal intellectual endowment but of the same chronological age'. But *how*? And is this really the way?

Sections II and III (p. 328, p. 331) overlap to a great extent. Dr. Pearson reviews methods of teaching which utilize the child's tendency to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Bribing, he says, either by actual rewards or by making the lessons so interesting that they are pleasurable, is to-day (in America) somewhat discounted; yet marks, promotions and so on,

which the child sees less as signs of achievement than as indications of the teacher's love, have their value in the learning process. The child does not learn for the sake of learning, but in order to obtain and retain affection; a subject may become distasteful and even unlearnable if it is connected with a hated teacher. If this occurs during the early stages of acquiring a subject, the child may become progressively more unable to master it; but if he has special coaching from a loved teacher so that he regains interest and catches up with the class, his specific disability can often be dealt with in time. Teachers who try to associate *not learning* with pain (punishment or disapproval) may find the method mis-carry for the same reasons.

Dr. Pearson reminds us that in primitive cultures the small boy can early and easily identify himself with his father's activities (e.g. making nets for fishing) and strive to emulate and surpass him in these: in Western culture it is hard for the boy to see why learning to read and multiply is essential for the office work he knows so little about, and therefore 'the teacher stands as a link between the child's wish to identify himself with the parent of the same sex and the use of this identification' as a reason for academic learning. The sex of the

teacher seems to have a bearing here (though Dr. Pearson only stresses it later in connection with extremely disturbed children): surely even infant school boys need a mixed staff so that they can legitimately identify with a male teacher?

Section IV (p. 335) discusses distractibility, day-dreaming, and the focussing of attention exclusively on learning so that the function of making relationships is impaired.

Finally (since I have to omit the two long sections on deeply disturbed children) Dr. Pearson (Section VII, p. 383) discusses the child who comes from what appears to be a 'good home', but who cannot learn easily. Toilet training has been slow and easy for him, sexual curiosity and exhibitionism have been allowed: by a mis-application of Freud's findings, the child has not yet learned to tolerate frustration of desires, and his ego-development is therefore retarded. Yet through affection for a good and patient teacher, the child can gradually subordinate his own wishes to the requirements of reality and of learning.

That this last problem seems to be more universal in America than in England is stressed in 'Notes on Child Rearing in America' (p. 387) by Christine Olden. This throws light on many American characteristics and



explains why some of the other articles in this Volume (most of which are American) stress by careful study certain behaviour problems such as the child who cannot tolerate frustration, and the aggressive child. Miss Olden asks why psycho-analytic principles have been accepted so readily in the U.S.A., and why the permissive aspects have there overshadowed the others. She finds her answers in history and in the effects of immigration to a young country. She sees in America now a tendency to turn away from progressive education, and stresses the need to improve rather than abandon it. Though, thanks to Anna Freud, Susan Isaacs and others, this warning against an over-strong swing of the pendulum towards reaction and suppression should be unnecessary in England, it is nevertheless timely.

Many other articles are of interest to educators, Leo Spiegel (Vol. VI, p. 375) on Adolescence; Margaret Harries (Vol. VII, p. 230) describing how four aggressive four-year-olds in a London nursery school solved the problem for themselves (and for their teachers) by sublimatory games; and a stimulating description by Lindemann and Dawes of a preventive psychiatry project now being carried out in a Boston suburb, which takes in all sections of the community and is following the children from the antenatal clinics through their lives. In this last article there is evidence that bears out the impression gained from reading both these Volumes under review—that education, psychology and psycho-analysis are fast reaching a stage where they will find themselves not merely within hailing distance of each other but able to co-operate fully in preventive as well as therapeutic work for the good of the children and mankind in general.

*Margaret Duncan*

### **Pioneers of English Education.**

*Edited by A. V. Judges (Faber & Faber, 25/-).*

Ostensibly a series of lectures delivered in King's College, London, on the life and thought of such nineteenth-century pioneers as Owen, Bentham and Mill, Spencer, Newman and Matthew Arnold, this book turns out to be a brilliant description of the social and intellectual climate of England during the last century, and of its influence on the thought and practice of English education. Indeed, it may even be called an outline of the development of our educational tradition during the last 150 years; for the first chapter contains an admirable analysis by the Vice-Chancellor of

Bristol University of this tradition with its insistence on the value of individual initiative and of diversity, and the last is an acute examination by the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education of how the modern administrator is trying to reconcile such a belief in individuality with the necessity of social control.

For these two additions to the subject-matter of the book we must thank the insight of the editor, who has not only written a valuable introductory chapter, summarizing the contribution of each pioneer, and contributed an illuminating chapter on Kay-Shuttleworth himself, but has also secured a first-class team of lecturers, nearly all of whom are fully in sympathy with the positive achievements and views of the pioneers they discuss.

Apart from the three lectures already mentioned, two in particular stand out—those devoted to the two natural foils, as the editor calls them, of the Victorian era—Spencer and Newman. Professor Lauwerys gives a picture of Spencer which in no way diminishes his appeal or his stature by an acknowledgment of the unoriginal and one-sided nature of his thought; while Mr. Beales' glowing account of Newman leaves us more than ever certain that he was one of the greatest minds of his age and, perhaps, to use the editor's words, the most typically English of them all.

This is not a book for everyman, as it needs close and careful reading, but no better volume could be put into the hands of Training College students, who desire to understand the higher purposes of education and how they have affected English educational thought and practice during the last 150 years. It can also be warmly recommended to foreign students of English life, since it shows more clearly perhaps than any other contemporary document certain of the sources of England's greatness—its belief in the value of individual insights and initiative, and its cult of diversity, which is much more than a mere toleration, since, as Sir Philip Morris writes here, it 'regards an institution as being all the stronger because it includes not only a variety of people but also differences in ideas and beliefs'.

*Wyatt Rawson*

### **TWO NEW BOOKS ON MUSIC**

**The Grammar of Music** *Hilda Hunter.* (Dennis Dobson. 6/-).

**Melody Writing and Analysis** *Annie Warburton.* (Longman's Green. 9/6).

Conveniently brief, **The Grammar of Music** is compact and covers the rudiments in a thorough and interesting manner. It is written for those intent on starting at the beginning of the subject. There are some useful chapters on melody making and writing, while the appendices contain a neatly tabulated list of foreign terms and a list of works for study. The presentation of subjects would, however, have been greatly simplified and improved by more musical examples and quotations. The examples of ornaments and their interpretation suffer from inconsistent labelling and grouping. The facsimile reproductions of very brief extracts from scores which are included are difficult to read—a pity in a book designed to attract and enlighten beginners.

Dr. Warburton has produced in **Melody Writing and Analysis** a text for students working up to the higher theory examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music or for musical diplomas. It is a guide for those who wish to know how to compose or analyse a melody and covers in considerable detail ground only lightly touched upon by other writers on music. The carefully graded parts of this volume cover all phases of melody writing, with and without words, from two-bar phrases to long irregular stanzas and blank verse. One particularly useful chapter deals expertly with the difficulties of setting words to a melody. The work is rounded off by two chapters which expound quite clearly melody analysis and the analysis of short piano pieces, entire movements being printed in notation which is readily legible. Throughout there are many well-explained illustrations and well-graded exercises.

*Alan C. Streater*

**Good Company.** *Mary Field.* (Longman's Green & Co. 12/6).

The story of the Children's Entertainment Film Movement in Great Britain from 1943 to 1950 could be told only by Miss Field, and needs to be known by all who wish to have recreational films for children produced with adequate regard to the welfare of their vast audiences. The 'combined operations' of the Advisory Council and C.E.F.—a department of G.B. Instructional which had no fixed abode and once at least had to be very discreet about its parentage in the matter of 'credit titles'—exemplify the difficulties in public relations which beset educationists in any sphere. Over and again one realized that the idea of this work was J. Arthur Rank's and



that he never lost faith in it. Similarly the skill and tenacity of Lady Allen of Hurtwood in the Chair of the Advisory Council are clearly seen in every vicissitude. Only Miss Field's personal contributions to solving the problems and especially to using fully every opportunity for international reciprocity are glossed over.

We see why it took six years to make twenty-one feature films, forty-three on 'travel' or 'nature' subjects, sixty-seven magazine films, and some half-dozen each of 'cartoon', 'interest', and 'community song' films. Some idea of the size of the problem can be gained by asking a group of youngsters now 14 to 15 (two years after the completion of the above production programme) how many of these films they have actually seen. With due caution these replies may be contrasted with the number of times they claim (or admit) to have attended cinema performances, (a) public, and (b) children's, since they were eight.

One of the main difficulties will not surprise teachers who have attempted to foster 'citizenship' and who have therefore faced that most challenging of all educational problems, how to appeal to the better side of the child's nature without pointing a moral so sharply as to hold up action or deflate interest. 'We agreed that all our films should have a documentary background, while the moral was to be implied rather than underlined, though it was by no means to be abandoned.'

It is to be hoped that its title—from Henry VIII's Madrigal, *Jocund in Good Company*—will not prevent this book's coming to the notice of the many types of reader to whom it is addressed. The 'concerned' and the 'critical' no less than the well-meaning will be helped to think more clearly and work more effectively in the cause of assuring good cinema for the young by reading this skilful and commendably 'light' handling of what is so often treated as a sombre subject. Yet it is the result of really serious work on the effects of films shown to young people and on the kinds of cinema material which they need and appreciate. These studies went on both before and during the efforts of the Rank C.E.F. team to reconcile Miss Field's findings with the material and technical problems involved in producing, distributing, and showing children's films to child audiences. Her records of her own and her colleagues' reactions to the problems involved in making films for children are also very informative and helpful to those of us concerned to take some part in helping the young to 'appreciate' the art of the cinema generally.

Ernest L. Fereday

## YOUNGSTERS IN YORKSHIRE

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Reviews of the following books will appear shortly:—

**Phantasy in Childhood**, Audrey Davidson and Judith Fay

(Routledge & Kegan Paul)

**Achievement in Education**, Lynda Grier

(Constable)

**The Pilot Reading Scheme**, Pat Devonport

(E. J. Arnold)

**Pathfinder Introductory Set, A, B, and C.**

(Oliver & Boyd)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DEAR MADAM,

I am most grateful to Miss Catty for her review of my book *From Day to Day in the Infant School*, which you include in your recent publication of *The New Era*.

In general I agree with her remarks, especially with regard to the undesirability of assuming that children in many schools are likely to wish to use material in exactly the same manner as children in another school. Her suggestion that a teacher might think it right to tell her children to use material in this manner cuts across the whole aim of the best modern Infants School education.

Miss Catty is aware of this danger when she discusses the harm which may be done by teaching number to children under 7 and 8 years of age. She appears to think that I favour such early teaching to all children. In the final chapter of my book, which I feel Miss Catty did not read in detail, I emphasize the impossibility of teaching a child at any age before the mind is ready for such teaching, and give diagrams to illustrate differences in children of similar age whom I have

actually known and whose work I have followed. The Daily Programmes on pages 50 and 51 make no suggestions for teacher-initiated compulsory teaching during Infant School days. However, the fact remains that many children are ready and anxious to record, read, write and do simple number work before 7 years of age. They also possess a real awareness of such mathematical values as height, length, weight, greater and less.

It seems to me that we cannot decide what is to be taught by simply taking note of *chronological* age. There are other factors to take into account, especially in relation to *individual differences* such as out-of-school environment, older and younger brothers and sisters, interests of parents and, above all, *individual mental age*.

Finally, I agree with Miss Catty that nothing can justify a teacher for engaging in 'laborious making' of apparatus. Most of the material which I suggest can be bought from recognized School Supply firms. However, many teachers like to make some material more particularly suited to the needs of their children. This is good, especially when the children themselves give some assistance, however small this may be.

It seems to me that one of the chief duties of a teacher of young children is to endeavour to keep herself happy, fresh and alert, in order that she may be a worthwhile friend and leader of those under her charge. Her business is to follow and assist the development of suitable interests which have been begun by the child and not by the teacher. She should know when to help and when to leave well alone. Under such conditions there is little danger of mental or emotional frustration, but rather a condition of rejoicing over achievement and mutual success.

Yours faithfully,

F. IRENE SERJEANT

DEAR MADAM,

I was rather disturbed to find in the opening article of your January issue constant references to 'Speech Therapy' and the 'Speech Therapist' when the subject of the article was so obviously *Speech Training* and the *Speech Trainer*. It may seem to be a small difference, but the whole article gives a most misleading idea of the work of a Speech Therapist, and the mistake should, I feel, be corrected. A Speech Therapist's work is purely medical and would never 'correct regional accents' etc.

I would be grateful if something could be done about this.

Yours faithfully,

M. M. JAMESON (Miss),  
Press Officer to the College of  
Speech Therapists



## NATIONAL FROEBEL FOUNDATION CHARACTER BUILDING AND THE NEW EDUCATION

The idea of this conference arose from conversations with teachers and other workers with children who were concerned at the difficulties facing children and adolescents in the modern world. Shifting moral standards, competing ideologies and the changed climate of opinion regarding the relative rôles of authority and individual responsibility have all combined to make the task of the educator more difficult, and it is hoped that an opportunity to discuss some of these problems with other people engaged in similar work will be both stimulating and helpful.

The plan for the course will be:  
FRIDAY, MARCH 6TH—7.30—9 p.m.:

Professor Niblett (Institute of Education, Leeds University) will outline some of the influences which tend to depersonalize living nowadays and will suggest ways in which the schools can meet the challenge.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7TH—

10 a.m.—12.30:

Dr. Cleugh (Institute of Education, London University) will give a short talk intended to stimulate discussion. The conference will break up into small groups which will report their findings at the end of the morning.

2.30—4.30 p.m.:

Miss Shewell Cooper (formerly lecturer in Divinity at Wandsworth

Training College and recently Warden of a hostel for working girls in Folkestone) will summarize the points raised during the week-end.

The lectures and discussions will be held at the National Froebel Foundation, 2 Manchester Square, W.1.

The fees for the course are 13/6 for members of the Froebel Foundation and 15/- for non-members. Cheques should be made payable to the National Froebel Foundation and inquiries addressed to the Conference Secretary.

*N.B.*—This course is limited to Children's Officers, County Organizers, Heads of Children's Homes, Schools and Clubs, Probation Officers and Training College Lecturers.

## Directory of Schools

### **KILQUHANITY HOUSE** CASTLE DOUGLAS SCOTLAND

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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## A WELCOME TO DENMARK

*Toben Gregerson, Secretary of the N.E.F. Danish Section*

IT is difficult to write anything brief and pithy about one's own country, though some foreign travellers seem to be willing to try to do so after a three days' trip. But I will try to write a little about Denmark in order to welcome there all our friends who will come to Askov from the 2nd-16th August.

Denmark is a country without great contrasts, in scenery, in economics, in education. The whole of Denmark is densely populated; in all districts you will find cottages and farms close together and numerous village schools between. Therefore, many people think that most Danes are farmers with wooden shoes and national costumes. They will be *very* disappointed!

Bacon, butter and eggs are famous products of Denmark, but Denmark is also a land of heavy and, especially, light industry, with big shipping yards, textile factories and a chemical industry—all based on raw materials that have to be imported. Perhaps this says something for the energies and talents of her people.

Fortunately, two persons from this country are generally known abroad: Hans Andersen (in Denmark called H. C. Andersen), author of the fairy tales, and N. F. S. Grundtvig, the father of the folk high schools—the only part of Danish education known by educators over the whole world. It is to be hoped that our guests will find a little of the spirit of these two famous Danes when they come to Denmark.

In Askov it will be easier than elsewhere to understand what Grundtvig means to us. Askov is our biggest and most famous folk high school—the continuation of the first Danish Folk High School, founded in Rødding in 1844, moved to Askov in 1865 after Schleswig was taken by Germany. Most folk high schools are based on 'the living (spoken) word', in contradistinction to the old bookish school, the academic school (the 'black school' as Grundtvig called it). In Askov a tradition has grown up, based on a lively blend-

ing of rural and academic culture. Not without reasons is Askov Folk High School called 'the people's university'. Famous Danish scientists and writers have been teachers there and have given Askov a special place in Danish cultural life.

To understand the educational situation in Denmark you must know a little of the history of the Danish school and education. The Education Act of 1814 demanded seven years' schooling. It allowed the parents themselves to teach their children, but this right is now claimed very rarely. For many years past no illiteracy has been observable in Denmark. After the seven compulsory years, the pupils can go on to further education, and here you will find the first point of dispute in Danish school-life to-day. After five years you must decide whether you will go on to the examination-free middle school or whether you will sit for an examination and, if successful, go to the examination type of middle school. The latter can be either a municipal school (*kommuneskole*), or private (but with government support), or a secondary school (either municipal, private or state school). This division of the able and less able children in the middle school is the easier solution (the cleverer pupils alone can go in for the middle school examination and the best of them go on to the 'gymnasium'). But many teachers and parents who are 'N.E.F.-minded' are against this form of organization and prefer the idea of the 'undivided' school—a single school for all pupils, from which the clever ones, after the nine years, can pass the middle school examination but where, meanwhile, all are taught together.

The second point of dispute is *individual teaching*, as described by Carleton Washburne in *Adjusting the School to the Child*—a book translated into Danish and of very great importance for progressive Danish teachers. After some not quite successful experiments using old-fashioned text-books, many Danish teachers started writing



new books especially for the first three or four school years (seven to ten years), and now many teachers are using individual teaching methods to a greater or lesser degree.

The Danish Section of the N.E.F. works on many themes besides those just mentioned (museum-school is one of the latest). Two factors have been of the greatest value for us:

(1) The tradition of our kindergartens is more progressive than the school tradition. A very big proportion of our kindergarten teachers are members of 'Socialpaedagogisk Forening' (Social-pedagogical Association, the Section's name) but unfortunately the kindergartens are not part of the Danish education system but of the social security system. Education in the kindergarten has, however, influenced both aesthetic education in the schools for older children (painting, pottery, dancing and music) and the establishment of parent-teacher co-operation.

(2) The growing interest in school psychology during the last twenty years. All over the country now school psychologists are working, especially in the bigger towns. They are teachers with three years' university training in psychology, working with the backward children (Cyril Burt really is the grandfather of Danish school psychology) with psycho-therapy, and also with planning and putting into practice experimental work in the schools.

The very well arranged School Psychological service makes good, in a sense, the lack of professors of education. Denmark has no lecturer in education at either of her universities. The educational research work is done by the Danish Committee of School Psychology (founded by the teachers' associations) with very little money, but with high enthusiasm and plenty of ideas.

I have two warnings for you: do not ask a Danish teacher or headmaster about his educational philosophy. He is sure to say that he has none! In Denmark most educators work according to ideas that are perhaps not so clear to them in theory, but that strongly affect their practice. Do not start a conversation with a Dane about group-feeling or group-spirit. He will say he has none. Of course he has, but we do not speak about it.

I hope you will understand: with us educational theory is not so developed as is what I feel to be a very sound practice.

Finally, I must tell you a secret: behind the 'Danish politeness' (which foreigners tend to comment upon) all Danes—even the most radical—have a certain conviction that, after all, we have the best things here in Denmark. But nevertheless, we all are awfully interested to hear and experience all the ideas, thoughts and practices of our friends. Short—you are so welcome in Denmark.

## POTTERY<sup>1</sup>—THE DEVELOPMENT OF SENSITIVENESS THROUGH A TRADITIONAL CRAFT

*Richard Dunning, Potter, City of Coventry Training College*

OUR starting point was a small square clay tablet made in Ur of the Chaldees in 1950-2000 B.C.; on its face are impressed marks, cuneiform writing symbols; on two of its sides are the finger-prints of the maker, made permanent by the fire of a simple kiln; but its back is defaced by a rough cavity where some bubble or scrap of stone burst in the heat of that same fire and marred the perfection of its surface. In this tablet we are reminded of these facts: clay is a plastic material which can be pressed easily into shape when softened by water but which, as it dries and hardens, holds the form given to it, together with any marks or indentations made on its surface; by being made at least red-hot in a fire it can be given an awe-inspiring

degree of permanence, both of the physical object and through it of an idea. At the same time, certain conditions must be fulfilled, or through neglect, insensitivity or carelessness, all may be ruined. Much work in pottery lies in finding how best both to master and conform to its rules; yet at the same time you are led to probe far back into the history of man's early development, and the characteristics of each period are so recognizable that clay objects may often be used to date the other things found near them in archaeological diggings.

We began our work in clay by trying to allow the essential qualities of the material to dictate

<sup>1</sup> An account of the Pottery Group at the English Section Conference, Coventry, August, 1952.



to us the life and action which modelled forms should take. We tried to educate the sensitivity which lies almost lost in our finger-tips by handling and feeling contemplatively a variety of materials—smooth cold glass, wood, hessian and silk, the crispness of paper, the convolutions of shells, and the harshness of wire wool and glass-paper. Blindfold, we took a piece of clay, dragging it with our fingers from its bin, and pounding it on a tile at a table at which we sat, then, thoughtfully, we began to push, to pull and to pinch the clay into a more deliberate form. Dismissing from our minds, as far as we could notions of representation, we ran our fingers over the surfaces as we made them, asking, 'Does this shape please my fingers? Does it feel good? What does it do to my imagination?' We found annoying interruptions to the passage of our finger-tips so we smoothed and stroked, or long dull stretches where punctuations were needed and we pulled out lumps or pushed holes deep into the mass accordingly—even right through. We tried to recognize as clearly as we could what we were experiencing, and to picture what we had modelled before we took off our bandages. When we looked at our work most of us were surprised to find it smaller and less clearly defined than we had felt it to be. The primary appeal of a piece of pottery must be through touch, through handling and using, for our hands are more delicate judges than we know and much that is designed from a purely visual standpoint is bad when judged on the more fundamental level. This sense of touch, we saw, must be developed if our later work in pottery was to be honest and satisfying. This is not to say that the visual aspect was not to play a great part in our work—it played, in fact, an important part in our next experiments—we had merely to try to assess its value more accurately.

We turned to discovering more fully the ways in which clay could—and could not—be used. We made patterns with clay on tiles, flat patterns for which, in a way, we could as well have used paint, combining large flat areas of pigment with loops, dots, spirals and straight lines and leaving other parts untouched. On such a pattern we tried out forms of surface texturing; we thought of the marks on the front of the tablet, so we used sticks, and shells, wire, the heads of nails and the threads of screws, and, thinking of the sides, we used our fingers to pinch the clay or tried the

result of pressing woven fabrics and twisted cords into the soft surface. We later extended our designing further by raising our patterns to eye level and using them as bases on which to construct three-dimensional patterns. 'Imagine', it was suggested, 'that you are insects on the edge of a field. Into what sort of landscape, based on this ground plan, would you walk with pleasure?' We built walls and towers, balls and pinnacles of clay.

In these two experiments we learned a good deal about our basic material; we found how easily it could be worked if it was in good condition, how thwarting it could be if it was too dry and how weak if too soft. We saw then that thin sections could not support any considerable weight (and how very vividly we remembered this later when some of our wet pots 'sat down'); we learned, too, that a model too quickly and casually put together shrinks, cracks and disintegrates in firing.

Modelling this plastic material bore no likeness to sawing wood or chipping stone. Our products were, and only could be, clay. We had been able to impress marks on its surface with hand and tool and, as our work stood drying on the shelf, we could see that some aspect of our experience, character and culture had been made permanent.

We came, then, to our early essays in the making of actual pots. Our first were pressed out of a round ball of clay by our thumbs and fingers as we rotated it in the hollow of one hand; others, later, were built up like baskets out of long rolls of clay, smoothed together on the inside and knit together outside by the rhythmic pattern of regular 'smudges' of thumb and finger. Some of the 'pinched pots' were decorated with impressed patterns, others by burnishing and incising. We followed, in both these types, traditions of the craft which are of vital importance. They are directly linked with and controlled by the limitations and disciplines inherent in the material, yet close adherence to them does not lead to narrowness of outlook for, so ancient is pottery and so manifold and varied its expression in various cultures, that the field is immensely wide.

The common notion of the making of a pot is of a man seated at a rotating wheel producing superb shapes with evident ease from the ball of clay upon it. But there are more ways of using clay without the aid of the potter's wheel than there are with it, and we became aware that, since



work on the wheel involves a great many technical methods which we could not hope to master rapidly, we could offset our failures to achieve success there by further work in the ways we had learned already.

Two kiln-loads of pots meant that almost everything we had made became permanent. It had been changed from clay through a few hours in the heat of the kiln, into a new substance. Here we stood again on the borderline of the mystical side of pottery; we entrusted our work to a seemingly destructive, yet in fact, reconstructive, force to achieve a new life, a phoenix myth within our experience. Some of our porous pots were then dipped in glaze mixtures. We could hardly believe that the colours to which they dried—lemon yellow, liver and yellow-tinged grey, could become glazes as we knew them. They were again packed in the kiln and heated up more strongly until, looking through the spy-holes, our eyes could hardly stand the glare. We could see the shimmering outlines of our pots and wondered how they could stand the strain. The final excitement came on the last evening when, still very warm, they were unpacked, and lay on the table. In place of the dusty dryness of a porous flower-pot, there was the lustre of a glazed surface; gone were the crude colours of the raw glazes, to be replaced by transparent cream, green and brown. The colours of the slips, grey and brown in their first application and but little different in the first fired state, were blue, black, cream and tawny yellow. As the pots cooled we felt again the urge to pick them up, and again our fingers appreciated the tactile pleasure of their surfaces, the contrast between the smoothness of the glaze and the rough originality of the uncoated clay. Throughout the course the problem had been how to combine the acquisition of new techniques with some satisfaction in the exploring of the inherent suggestion of the materials which we were using. We could touch only the fringes of the subject. As we worked we were given a whole range of new, stimulating ideas—the pots and pictures in the room, the talks on technical points, on glazes and on simple kilns—yet most of us, as the course passed from the uneasy days of settling in, felt able to break away from these to carry on our own ideas and interests. One member found clay an unsatisfactory material, too unyielding and indefinite, and spent most of his time carving blocks of plaster, another concentrated on hand-built

pots, leaving 'the wheel' for another time, while a third spent some time on delightful small models.

I feel, from what I see the Group did for me as its Leader, that I am justified in writing in this personal way. At no time did I feel an impelling urge to work at my own projects; the intensity of the work of others compelled my closest attention, their concentration my absorption. First reports, three days after we had started, showed me that confusion had arisen, with some lessening of initial enthusiasm. I was prepared for this; the frustrations of the craft are many and come quite early. If a rapid acceptance of the rigid discipline of the craft can be made, the final triumph is the greater. One must abandon preconceived desires with humility. The next step is to acquire sufficiently varied techniques to secure satisfaction in simple products before essaying the more difficult ones. Each new step must be an adventure; in a longer period of time there would not be that feeling of urgency which worried some members of the Group in the early stages—though less so later, even though there remained the rush to get pots ready for drying, firing and glazing within the limits of the time.

Much of what we were able to do was due to the demonstrations which Geoffrey Bridge gave; his skill and enthusiasm spurred us on, his contributions to discussions and his wide grasp of the subject were invaluable. From our varied experiences and backgrounds we were able to offer a wide field of experience to the Group. We set out not to give a comprehensive overall mastery of pottery—that would have been impossible—but rather an urge to go further. Complete and final mastery is never reached—therein lies the fascination.

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# CREATIVE PAINTING

*C. T. Daltry, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics, University of London Institute of Education*

**T**HIS is an account of the activities in creative painting of one member of Mrs. Jeanie Cannon's group at the Coventry Conference in August 1952. The group met on Thursday, 7th August, and between then and the following Thursday I covered nine sheets of *The Times* newspaper with paintings. I believe that a detailed account of how these paintings created themselves may be interesting to others who wish to paint.

When a boy at school, I used to paint in water colours—the usual subjects, flowers, vases, still life. My chief work in life is the training of teachers of mathematics. I have always enjoyed teaching mathematics and in my teaching I have always used coloured chalks very freely. I revel in patterns and forms occurring in spatial relationships. Although I had seen the work of Mrs. Cannon's group at the earlier conference (Chichester 1951) I had never used her painting material, powder paint, until a few weeks ago. I then relieved the stress of a mathematical conference at Brazier's Park by painting two pictures in powder paints using my own unguided methods. The first showed a group of buildings. It pleased me, but it now seems bright, hard and tense. The second is softer and more distant: it shows a vista—looking up the garden terraces. In painting these I worked by the light of nature, on white paper, to please myself. I evolved my own ways of representing things. I may add that two years ago I took up the study of the piano-forte once again under a teacher of genius and learnt for the first time how to enjoy the conscious acquisition of a musical technique. Few experiences can be more satisfying to a teacher than to realize that he is being taught brilliantly, that he has really comprehended the way to success and that the rest is only time, patience and delight. This experience, already familiar in one medium, was repeated in another.

## Beginnings

After we had chosen a few big brushes we were given sheets of *The Times* newspaper. Mrs. Cannon told us that we should presently have to make patterns on the paper—not just doodles, though even a doodle could be transformed into

a significant painting as she showed us by an example painted on the spot. We should have to *feel* the shape of any pattern we put on our paper. I believe one or two people did then try to make patterns on their paper which they really felt, but I waited for what was to come next. She next asked us to think about two contrasting themes, 'Life' and 'Death'. We were to show in black paint with our brushes whatever patterns or shapes or pictures came into our minds when we thought of 'Life'—later we were to do the same for the thought of 'Death'. I believe Mrs. Cannon indicated her own notion for Life—a kind of circling curve. Anyhow the notion of Life to me produced a cloud-like outline—chubby, curved. Death aroused in my mind thoughts of factories, rows of houses, trams, greyness and the pattern turned out to be something which a friend described as a row of tombstones. We were asked to colour our patterns using the colours that came into our heads, and blue turned up for the first, brown for the second. We were then encouraged to attempt, on a second sheet of newspaper, any picture that came to mind. I remembered a view of Corfe Castle in the gap between rows of hills that I had seen from some high land near Swanage last year, and I tried to represent my vision roughly, using goodish sweeps of the colours that seemed suitable. The large brushes helped enormously. I should say here that the printing on the newspaper did not worry me at all, ever. Indeed I think it helped. A white sheet is much more frightening—one is afraid of spoiling it. If the printing did not fit in with the picture one was creating, then some paint, thickly spread soon obliterated it and produced the impression desired. Looking later at Corfe Castle I see that somehow there is an impression of space and distance in the picture but, of course, I did not *consciously* strive to put these impressions there.

## Pattern, Portrait, Picture

Next morning Mrs. Cannon asked us to make in black paint any pattern that came freely to our minds and which we could represent by allowing our hands to move freely. I supposed that my frequent sketching of mathematical patterns on



blackboards produced an affair of decreasing coils repeated up and down the paper. As I allowed my hand to make whatever motion came into my mind I discovered that I drew other curves which gradually joined up with the coils, until I had various swirls, some joining some encircling. Some joined to produce wide curves, others joined to produce finely tapered patterns. When we were asked to colour our patterns my colours turned out blue, orange, green and yellow. The final orange pattern gave me deep satisfaction and looked most lively and beautiful. I believe, writing from memory, perhaps too late after the event, that we were next encouraged to attempt a portrait—either imaginary, or the portrait of a clown. I chose the latter, probably because I had a pretty vivid memory of a painting of a clown's face. (Mrs. Cannon tells me the painting is by Rouault.) I knew how I wished to begin—steeple hat, black bobbles, black thick rim. The rest of the picture evolved itself, though I had to rack my brains to decide what colour (white or black) went round the eyes! My unconscious mind must have decided for me, and it worked out a satisfying kind of neck gear, and a large and depressing mouth: also some substantial ears. I do not remember more of the mental processes whereby this image was created. I do recall the notions 'why not give him a background?—green grass, tent, coloured stripes', coming gradually to mind. I put in these stripes according to my whim—I saw later that they had repeated the slope of the hat and face. Mrs. Cannon gently pointed out that this clown was in fact a self-portrait. This was a revelation to me, and showed me something of what lies behind this method of painting. It is all, to say the least, very, very interesting.

I believe we were then left to our own devices to paint what we pleased and it occurred to me to paint the view from the artist's window, immediately to my right. I think I had been influenced by a set of pictures of Welsh scenes from a recent King Penguin *A Prospect of Wales*. I spent most of the war in Wales, evacuated, living with my family in an old farmhouse and deeply affected by the scenery of the country. The Pelican paintings seemed so simple, so effective, so satisfying, that I believed I could do them. I have certainly looked at them again and again. The first was a view from a window.

In painting my view I consciously noted one

or two points of technique. I suppose that Mrs. Cannon, wisest of teachers, had gradually persuaded us to accept the fundamental principle of her approach—that the technique for painting a particular picture will be developed by oneself when one comes to paint that picture. I believe the implications of this principle to be tremendous and revolutionary. I have certainly accepted it. I realized for instance that the deep black bars of the window should be painted in last, right across the view, so as to convey the sharp outline, the solidity of the window bars. I began by roughing in the lines of sky, fields, trees and huts. The sky bothered me—how to achieve distance. I didn't worry but went off to paint the huts with stabs of bright colour to represent the flowers near them. I discovered that if one is bothered by a problem one should move to something else—if the suggestion comes to mind that is. I noted that sometimes a fine brush, sometimes a rough brush, or a thicker brush was suggested: I think this is due to fatigue or boredom within one's deeper mental activities. Something wearies of broad swashes, or else of fine lines and moves to the other end of the scale, so to speak. I have found a similar movement from one contrast to another in shade or balance. I found myself (in later pictures) spreading a deep tone-brown, blue, green in a corner, all round the drawing pin, until I had a triangular patch cutting off the corner. I believe that one's unconscious mind perceives a picture as a whole only if it is a whole, is it really deeply perceived—and this whole is balanced. I was striving for balance when I found masses of tone arriving in the corners: I shall be on the look out for this feeling when painting in the future.

I left my view and went to lunch. A member of the group who was painting some distance away from me said over lunch: 'How did you get the distance into your view?' I had not seen my picture from his position: but when I saw it away from my easel I realized that somehow, in following the notions of colour and brushwork that had come into my mind, an element had been created of which I had been unaware. This was becoming fascinating.

### Pattern and Landscape

About this time I did another pattern—looking at the fresh sheet from *The Times* (placed upside down to avoid distraction of course!) and allowing



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**2nd–16th AUGUST, 1953**

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my hand to follow its course. This pattern turned out to be a set of repeated whirls sloping across the page in descending lines. The colours which suggested themselves were green and red and the whole would have made a good window fabric pattern. So someone suggested: it gave me pleasure. Mrs. Cannon contemplating my works said that she would like to see me show the Downs in a picture—to see how the lines or curves would come out. So on Sunday afternoon I set about creating such a view from imagination and memory. I produced my first really deeply creative work and as the process is clear to my conscious mind I will describe it in detail.

Something suggested a view of the sea through a dip in the hills. I was happy in beginning by tracing this dip: the left hand outline shaped itself gracefully, it dipped down and then came up in an awkward sort of scarp: I tried to alter it but felt unsecure of myself. In the end I let it stand. I tried putting in the sea in wavy ripples—no good: in a flash I knew what I wanted—descending broad bands of deepening grey blue. I must have painted in the sky above. My views from the window had taught me a thing or two about painting skies—I was confident about them now; thick white at the top (this obliterated the newsprint) then wisps of blue, some rounded curly clumps of white, tinged with faint golden yellow (I glanced out of my window to refresh my memory!). The sky came out nicely—so did the sea. I believe that I then returned to my cliff-top outline and was so defeated by it that I put the drawing aside and started another—but I soon realized that I could not begin afresh. I should be too fatigued, and I could obliterate anything in my first attempt by using solid white or other colour. Confidence in realizing this has been slow to develop, yet it is the primary virtue of this wonderful medium, powder paint. The secondary virtues lie in the bright colours and the lovely feeling one has in spreading them with the brush. I do not recall the precise sequence of subsequent events but I remember mixing green until it satisfied me, then spreading it and realizing that one should reproduce the shape of the land in the curves of one's brushwork. Even if I had to paint a square patch I should do it differently according to the texture or orientation of this bit of surface. Henceforward one's brush curved over hills and dales. Somehow I was impelled to use black



and then the notion of thin lines came, then a curve—then I realized that my inner, unconscious memory was urging me to reproduce a widening road leading through the dip towards the sea. Brown and a rough brush came to mind and I found myself painting with rough sweeps what I knew to be the roof of a cottage. Something very important followed.

### The Creative Mind at Work

I must have *argued* that a cottage needed a chimney so I got some black paint and brush and painted a chimney. But the chimney would not go right—nothing told me when to stop blacking it in : it grew too big: I was not a bit pleased—so I must have followed another line of thought that came—cornfields or the road?—and left the chimney. Presently I found myself painting a green field around the cottage—and the wrong, black chimney went out, painted over by the green of the fields, and how pleased I was.

Now that the painting is complete I know that in my memory are at least two views of the sea interwoven—Dorset and Wales. I believe I was painting a Welsh farm building (not a cottage, probably a cow-barn) in a Dorset landscape. It is interesting that many people have assured me that in their travels they have seen my landscape; up and down the shores of these islands.

I realize now how completely and absolutely opposed to creative painting was the kindly advice of a member of another group: learning that I had found difficulty over painting a chimney on a cottage she urged me to go and look at a chimney on a red brick building nearby, even indicating the building. To do this would have been fatal. I was striving to let my hand, through brush, colour, depth, texture, reproduce what my deep unconscious mind held as its memory of some landscape(s) that had impressed me deeply. I needed to be patient, to listen, to be aware of what my inner voices would murmur. In time they settled the chimney to their satisfaction. They also produced stooks in the corn, a tree, stone walls, hedges. I discovered that if something inside me suggested vaguely 'yellow', then I was urged to paint yellow in various places: a gorse bush appeared as well as cornfields, and little specks (sunlight through the leaves?) on the tree. Using, all over the place, the colour that comes to the brush, seems to be a procedure to be noted. The tree continued to

be shaped by dabs of varying green, of black—I realized that branches were being suggested—then suddenly after painting in happily a curiously shaped bit of black I realized I was being induced to show branches coming out of the picture—a three-dimensional impression. Later I found solid triangles of yellow appearing against the blue sea on the sky line—they felt lovely to paint and I realized I was trying to represent stooks. Presently when my brush that had been dipped in black paint was nearly dry I was impelled to put faint dark marks on these triangles—and the shape of the stooks became clearer. Note that I did *what I was impelled to do*. I did not think—'How can I improve those stooks?' I let my brush roam where it will. This may sound absurd, but in fact if you do sit in front of paper, some choice of brush, of colour, of shape is made by you, somehow. I have, so far, never used certain colours by themselves—others have come to my mind. Accepting this guidance from within in all things, is, I suppose, the fundamental discipline of creative painting.

I realize now that awkward seeming lines in the early stages of painting a picture will presently associate and resolve themselves and flow together and suggest other lines until the whole composition is evolved. Someone has quoted Marion Milner's phrase—'the picture answers back'. Certainly line calls to line. The awkward hump that had first bothered me turned out to be cornfields and stooks on a headland going away into the picture, towards the sea, and looks perfectly all right.

One of the arts that can only come later is that of knowing *when* to stop. I certainly believe that I 'nattered' at this landscape too long. And although I thought it a real creative achievement on the day it was completed it now seems garish, hard and stiff. The blacks are too black, the outlines too sharp. But it must stay as it is.

### Painting a Portrait

On the Tuesday morning we were set to paint a portrait from a living model, Miss Elgin Strub, who kindly sat for us (with breaks for rest) for over two hours. Again I was rather apprehensive of painting a portrait because I had seen Mrs. Cannon at work and I knew that her particular technique, using a big brush and generous strokes and dabs of colour was not my technique. What



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my technique might be I did not know. I should have had more faith in Mrs. Cannon's principle that the creative artist creates his own technique for each picture. The more that I reflect on this principle the more revolutionary and drastic does it appear to be. For instance it cuts right through the root of the flourishing growth of that false teaching which requires a course of techniques on how to paint this and that before one really begins to paint this and that. As soon as our sitter was posed I began as seemed best by sketching the general outline of the head and then painted the hair—dark, hanging strokes and fuzzy wisps and patches—without difficulty. For the outline of the features I found myself doing what I had not done before—getting a far finer brush than any I had used hitherto. Again the 'fatigue' or 'contrast' element operated to send me from the features (incomplete of course) to paint the gorgeous red velvet of the upper dress. One could achieve marvellous effects of the bloom on the velvet with red and white and combined tones of these colours. I found my brush automatically following the folds and curves of the dress. Again a technique for painting the

flowered pattern of the skirt came by dabbing the brush—a kind of ring with a central blob had been achieved somewhere and as soon as this came I found myself repeating it up and down with varying intensity. I note that the intensity of the paint on the brush seems to decide where one's (unconscious) mind shall direct the next strokes. Time and time again as the paint is passing off the brush I find fainter and fainter patches and strokes being made in suitable places on the painting. Returning to my portrait painting I discovered that to get a satisfying effect one had to reproduce, by the motion and flow of the brushwork, the flow of the lines of the body. Thus coming back after coffee and contemplating a pink patch representing a bit of the leg visible below the skirt I realized why that was not convincingly painted—it was just a patch not painted through following down the lines of the body and leg. At a later stage in the painting I found myself attempting, in a satisfying manner, to paint the hands by making the strokes reproduce the 'away' flow of the separate, relaxed hands. The time element created a new difficulty because one could not complete the



portrait within the time available. Without the sitter I found myself unable even to paint the background cloth—because I had not properly placed the sitter with respect to it in my preliminary outlining. I have therefore learnt that more attention must be given to the fixing of lines and points in the very first stages. However the result was astonishingly gratifying for a first attempt. Looking at the paintings of other members of the group one felt that everyone had portrayed convincingly a real person, that the effects had been differently conveyed by different painters and that some were amazingly effective. I recall the shading of the face in one painting, and in another the utterly satisfying effect of a relaxed body created by a dozen properly painted strokes of black. As first achievements they were unbelievably good.

### Music in the Hall

The last picture of the series seems to be almost miraculous—may I stress that I did not *try* to paint this picture, it created itself. It arose by accident. Mrs. Cannon had asked us to paint the impressions that came into our mind when a piece of piano music was played to us (at our morning meeting). I was not looking forward to this: it was a new venture, I was not entirely easy about what might happen, or might come forth—suppose one had no impressions, or confused impressions? Anyhow owing to a late Tuesday evening I overslept on the following morning, was later in finishing breakfast than I realized and suddenly heard the sound of music from the hall. I could not get to a seat—and suddenly I realized that in front of me was a picture waiting to be painted—the pianist, piano, audience, music—all sitting for their picture. I tried to note colours and lines and shapes: after the music I borrowed a pencil and made a sketch on the back of an envelope (not used later, however).

I began with an independent sketch (from memory) and soon the piano and some masses and lines appeared. Later the picture built itself up more convincingly from the left—and the first piano was obliterated by paint and replaced in another position by a second! Otherwise I followed my star: if blue came to my mind, I mixed whatever seemed right and applied it wherever it felt right and if soft strokes of blue

felt right up and down the picture I simply let my hand and brush follow their inclination. Of course they were striving to create the inner memory of space and light—and in the end they were successful beyond all conscious imagining. Unfortunately I could not finish the picture before night—I was tremendously excited by its successful creation of itself and realized that even in its unfinished state it was a considerable achievement. I rose early next morning, but soon realized that my inner vision had departed. For one thing the morning light in the studio was entirely different from the evening light: but my inner promptings were fainter and less certain. I stopped: but the result still amazes me. I see that another time I should strive to make a rapid colour-sketch, and that I should try to complete the picture in one day. This piece of knowledge is worth having; obviously one can easily lose confidence by attempting a picture that cannot possibly be created because external conditions are too difficult.

### Awareness

Blessings rarely come singly. I noticed on the third day of our painting, for the first time, in a dark corridor, a painting by Renoir—'Portrait of a Child'—and in a flash I *felt* how the painting had been done. I could sense the feel of the brushes spreading the paint. I knew what had been in the artist's mind—that he had felt the simplicity, the freshness, the tenderness of childhood and had sought to capture it by the texture and pattern of his painting. I could sense the bloom on the cheek, the softness of the hands, the limpid depths of the eyes. I realized the rightness of the splashes of red colour, of the haphazard greens and yellows of the background. The painting and its creation came alive to me. I now look at all paintings in this way. I see that an artist strives to depict a *vision*, not a representation: he paints visions, not pictures. I find that I am more sure of myself in deciding the quality of a painting—distinguishing the works of the masters from those of the pupils. In particular, since painting the last of my series, I can appreciate J. W. M. Turner as never before.

Moreover looking at pictures in this way has made me aware of visions of form and beauty—of paintable quality, so to speak—in the world



around. Whilst driving a car along a road I become aware of the shades and intensities of the greens of the trees and hedges: a cornfield strikes my eye because of the unusual colour of the stooks—into my mind comes the notions 'lemon yellow', 'grey'—and a pattern of scalloped tiles on a house simply leaps into view. In the streets I am aware of types straight out of Breughel or the Douanier Rousseau: I note the eyes of a child taking a younger sister shopping by one hand, clutching a pound note in the other. Two old women gossiping are revealed as significant personalities: one notes the lines and stresses in their faces. One recognizes things that one could paint quite easily, one knows how to blend the colours, the size and feel of the brushwork: one knows how to begin.

### Technique

Few activities can be more fascinating to a teacher than his awareness of his acquisition of new skills and new possibilities of achievement. One gradually relaxes, paints more easily, more freely, adds touches here, there, as the ideas 'come into the mind'—'thicken this sloping line', 'put more green here, more, more, more,—and if presently a more comprehensive pattern builds up then one easily obliterates what has already been created.

Mixing the colours is most interesting. I find that my hand moves 'automatically' into some colour, the brush takes as much as the mind requires, adds just enough of blue or yellow or white and mixes in appropriate patterns on the tile I use for a palette. I believe that as my brush mixes the paints on the palette my mind is 'making up its mind' almost! I find my brush making the kind of strokes that are to go on the paper, and I allow it to take its time until the intensity of the paint feels right. I sometimes find myself pressing out unnecessary paint from the brush against the edge of the tile: sometimes I gather all the paint on the tip of the brush to create some full deep stroke. But always I follow the impressions that come into my mind: I persuade my conscious mind to stand aside, on the alert as it were, for all guidance coming from below. This seems to be the foundation of all that has occurred, and on this foundation who knows what one may build? Time will show.

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# SOCIOLOGY AND THE FREE SPIRIT OF MAN

## Justification of a Conference Technique

*Wyatt Rawson, Director of Studies, Cranborne Chase School*

**D**URING the last two years the New Education Fellowship has been experimenting with a new type of conference. At Chichester and Coventry, as at the Frensham Conference, New South Wales, members did not attend formal lectures but worked together in groups under a leader, mostly at one of the arts, making poetry, pots and paintings. At Askov, although lectures will not be excluded, the same technique will be tried out on a wider scale and at a larger conference. This procedure seems odd to many of our friends, particularly on the Continent, and it may be in place to explain both why this technique has been adopted, and how this development has inevitably occurred within the Fellowship itself.

As to the first question, since one of the principles of the New Education has always been 'Learning by Doing', it is but natural that this method should be applied to N.E.F. Conferences, and that the teacher, wishing to know the feelings of a child towards himself and the class, should put himself in the same situation and learn what it feels like. Not only so, but one of the chief problems of the New Education has been how to call forth the creative spirit in children and to discover the conditions that help it or hinder it. To undertake some task of creation oneself is the best way of learning what these are. It is often a new and valuable experience for a teacher to find himself not only among the taught, but called upon to use those creative forces within him which the narrowing routine of school and classroom has too often tended to atrophy. What a wonderful sense of release has come to some, as they found themselves in painting or poetry! A release, too, which communicates itself to their whole attitude to their work and to their pupils.

So much has been demonstrated in the last two conferences. But the need for such methods has only become apparent in recent years. Why is this? The reason lies in the development of the New Education itself. A short retrospect will make this clear.

The Fellowship was founded upon a belief in the creative power of human beings. At first, we called this freedom, and sought a type of education which would free, instead of fettering, the

spirit of the growing child, re-examining traditional methods and ideals in the light of this need. This soon brought us to a study of psychology. What did we mean by freedom? One aspect of this freedom was certainly to be found in the absence of repressions and compulsive reactions, the harmful nature of which was revealed in the psychology of the unconscious. But this was not enough. The freedom we sought was something very much more than this, and seemed to be bound up with the relationship between society and its groups and the growing individual.

So our next contact was with sociology and its study of group life. From it we sought a light to guide us through the tangled growth of human relationships, a clarification of the influences that social life brings to bear upon the individual and his personal efforts. But curiously enough it not only provided us with this elucidation but threw an unexpectedly bright light upon what we meant by freedom, that is the spontaneous and creative forces that exist in children and in men.

During the last war a whole new world was opened to many members of the N.E.F. by their contact with Karl Mannheim and it may be of value to outline what it was that he stood for, so as to make clear what the sociologists have contributed to our understanding of the principles of the New Education. Mannheim's views were crystallized in a number of concepts, which he sought to clarify by employing a special terminology. Thus he talked of social institutions as storehouses of behaviour-patterns, and spoke of 'primary images' when he wished to refer to those ideals of behaviour and attitude that are unconsciously acquired by the child in his home. It is easy to laugh at such terms, but they were valuable pointers to facts too often neglected and threw into relief certain important aspects of social life.

What were the new points that his analysis made clear? Let us enumerate them. First of all, he spoke of the value of 'marginal' opinion, of freaks and minorities, particularly in times of crisis, and talked of the 'prestige-carriers' of a society running about, seeking new patterns of behaviour, new social habits, from marginal



groups. We thought of the first world war and the introduction of Daylight Saving, or of Eleanor Rathbone and the final granting of Family Allowances during the second world war—and we understood what he meant, and took to heart our educational lesson. For Education must defend minorities; it is as responsible for the marginal as for the traditional type and for the new and original as for the established and accepted.

Secondly, Mannheim stressed the value of solitude. It is in solitude, or at least far removed from the exigencies of social life, that insights come. He saw the value of monastic withdrawal, and had nothing but contempt for the attitude declared in the song, so popular at one time between the world wars—'The more we are together, the merrier we shall be'. What teacher has not had to deal with a child of marked originality, who for this reason keeps to himself and tends to become lonely? Such a child may need help so as not to develop an anti-social attitude, but how careful we should also be to provide opportunities of fruitful solitude, at least for those whose thoughts and feelings do not run on accepted lines! We should all be acutely aware of how sensitive are insights and originality, and how easily they can be stifled, if not killed, in the growing child.

Mannheim also confirmed us in our belief in the power of education, declaring that most instincts are really only complex habits due to the influence of society and its forces. He spoke (paradoxically) of a gradual transformation by which human nature can be changed. This transformation, however, must be the work of all the educational forces in the community—home, school, factory, cinema and radio. It is not enough to confine our attention to what goes on in the classroom or the school. The home is still the most important, for there the behaviour patterns of later life are first formed. But all the educational forces of society interact so closely that we need not despair even if there seems to be (at least in England) no organization directly concerned to re-educate the home. Already the clinics are providing valuable aid, and when the Education Act of 1944 is finally implemented and Community Centres are set up all over England, we shall have an institution at hand that may be well suited to this work.

Industry also has its part to play. It may be that industry as a whole, following the example of certain enlightened firms, will develop its own

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part-time educational services. There are obvious dangers in this, but the institutional framework is not as important as the spirit that works within it, and many firms now realize the value of an all-round education, not so much as a technical aid, but as making for a balanced personality capable of reacting wisely to the strains and stresses of corporate life and so tending towards a smoother running of workshop and factory. It is debatable whether or not this will increase production. What it certainly will do is to increase the sum of human happiness, particularly if the education given is run on modern lines, preparing youth to engage in co-operative teamwork and recognizing the value of the original contribution of each individual to the whole.

Professor Mannheim's attitude to planning has often been misrepresented. He believed, for instance, in planning for leisure, not in organizing it, declaring, with very good reason, that unless we do look ahead and plan, freedom and originality will soon be extinguished. This is clear when we consider the housing problem in England. The dormitory town with no civic centre allows little room for the development of local initiative, since it provides no platform for the original work of its inhabitants, so that they are reduced to the 'borrowed experiences' of cinema and wireless instead of taking part directly in their own dramatic and musical creations. In considering how leisure can be more fruitfully used, Mannheim insisted on the need for the help of the more sensitive person, one who by the depth of his understanding and enthusiasm can inspire others with his own vision.

He saw, nevertheless, that codes of behaviour are necessary, and thought that one of the tasks of education was to achieve sufficient self-discipline among the population to secure voluntary submission to them. He never made the mistake, of which the New Education is sometimes wrongly accused, of thinking that if adults abdicate, the younger generation will build up a new and better society when it comes of age. For the younger generation is bound to be engaged in learning and applying the adult norms, and what we need is a type of authority that is not founded merely upon force or greater experience, but includes a real respect for others and an awareness of one's own limitations and defects.

For some of us Mannheim's most vital contribution to the New Education was his conviction

that religion and humanism must unite. Sociology was not enough; it led inevitably beyond itself into a realm not amenable to determinism or intellectual argument. He believed that we must be moved by an ancient and timeless vision, while remaining sensitive to the needs of the present.

It is often supposed that the New Education is purely humanistic and that religion plays little or no part in its attitude to life. This view is false. The founders of the Fellowship and of many of its new schools in different parts of the world were all religiously minded. They were believers, though often they belonged not to the prevailing religious organizations of their country but to one of those smaller, marginal groups, from which would come, so Mannheim declared, the new insights needed to remake our civilization. Indeed the New Education Fellowship has largely been the creation of those with religious convictions. It has aimed at the creation of a more Christian civilization, if we may interpret the word Christian in its widest sense. Here Mannheim's message was vital. He declared that the great primeval images of Christianity had in no wise lost their validity, although they had grown stale and dead in face of the challenge of our mechanized society. He believed that they would be revived if we could fit them to the modern situation. Commands such as 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' must be extended and given a social meaning in community service. What he called the paradigmatic aspect of Christianity, its symbolism and parables, seemed to him to contain eternal truths. It is not that we have lost our fundamental beliefs; here in England at least the Christian insights, the Christian ideal, still stand and have never been abandoned. The difficulty is in re-interpreting our symbols and our parables in terms of modern problems. Once so re-interpreted they will regain their power.

Religion, like all great philosophic and artistic insights, is caught, not taught. It is derived from contact with the truly religious person and from a reverence for those whose vision we have learnt to respect—a reverence which, as Goethe said, we need to learn as part of our social inheritance. Great works of art, great religious lives, great systems of thought are not to be easily grasped. They have an authority that is timeless. For they demand of each individual an attempt to rise above the present self, to deepen the understanding and open the doors of the mind and heart to



something beyond themselves. This attempt to free the self from its self-hood, as Blake might say, is one part of the task of the school.

It is to be noted that religion, philosophy and the arts are here treated as all belonging to one aspect—the cultural aspect—of life, which has to be clearly distinguished from the social and scientific aspects. It is important that they should be so distinguished, or we shall begin to talk about artistic progress or religious progress as though these phrases had the same meaning as scientific or social progress. As Alfred Weber<sup>1</sup> has persuasively argued, there is no cultural progress as such: culture is the reaction of the creative human spirit to the progress of science and technology and the resultant reorganization of social life. Our present cultural and moral predicament is due to the rapidity with which these have changed during the last 50 to 100 years. We need a re-humanization, I would like to call it a re-spiritualization, of life. Faced with a new con-

stellation, a new crystallization, of the external and scientific elements in our existence, we need to renew our symbols—our art, our philosophy and our religion.

We seem to have wandered far from our point of departure, the new conference technique evolved by the Fellowship. Yet we have really been touching its deeper sense all the time. For education to achieve its ends, as Miss Richardson said in the January number of *The New Era*, 'an understanding of the psychological forces at work in the group' is needed. This sociological knowledge can be gained by any teacher who joins one of the groups at Askov, thus becoming a pupil again and learning all that that implies.

But something else is required if we are to understand the needs of the children we teach. There is an original and creative element in man, which must be called forth and given a sphere of operation, if the individual is not to become a truncated and frustrated human being. Those who attend one of the groups at Askov will be able to 'feel in their bones' just what these creative forces are, what they need for their development and how the sensitive teacher can best guide them to mature fulfilment.

<sup>1</sup> His arguments are brought together in his recently-published book, *Prinzipien der Geschichts- und Kultursoziologie*. It would be extremely valuable if this book could be translated into English, as it deals illuminatingly with the relationship between sociology and the creative element in man, and shows to those engaged in the social sciences the necessary limitations of their specialism, and to the philosopher and religious thinker the relation of their efforts to the social and intellectual life of their time.

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Equally suitable as an initiation course for less able children of nine-plus and as a rehabilitation course for backward secondary school children.

LONGMANS



# AN AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE

*Morven S. Brown, Senior Lecturer in Education, Sydney University*

**L**AST Wednesday a very unusual kind of summer school came to and end at Frensham, Mittagong, New South Wales. The school was planned and run by the New Education Fellowship—as part of its attempt to make education more creative, less competitive, and more concerned with the development of mature personalities. In this latest venture the idea was to give groups of adults a chance to engage in creative activity under the guidance of acknowledged leaders in several fields of art. The object was not to impart technical skill—the school lasted only ten days—but rather to enable teachers to gain confidence in their own artistic taste and perception through practical experience with one or other forms of artistic expression.

The school was carefully planned over many months by a committee headed by Mrs. Clarice McNamara. In its final meetings the committee co-opted the specially chosen art group leaders: Lyndon Dadswell (sculpture), John Lipscombe and Desiderius Orban (painting), Geoffrey Thomas (drama), and Terence Hunt (music).

On the opening day, the 29th December, the 107 people who attended were invited to select which one of the five art groups each preferred to join. Each person was strongly urged to select a form of art in which he felt he had no special aptitude or skill: thus, those who were good at painting were encouraged to join the sculpture or drama or music groups; those who had done some acting were steered away from the drama group, and so on. The groups worked with their leaders from 9.30 to 12.30 for ten successive mornings, and many members returned to the workrooms (or found suitable places in the lovely Frensham school grounds) for further work at other times.

In some cases quite extraordinary progress was made. One leader told me that, because of their enthusiasm, his group learnt as much in ten days as his regular part-time art students learnt in a term and a half. Emphasis was laid on creative work, and the groups revelled in writing and producing short plays and mimes, in composing melodies and songs, and in producing a variety of paintings and sculptures. The leaders got their groups working on the 'freer' sorts of expression to begin with, and only gradually led them to bring their work under the discipline implicit in the nature and limitations of the media they were using.

But there was no special stress on technique, nor any effort made to uncover latent artistic promise. The essential idea was to give people what one woman happily called 'an adventure in understanding', by opening a new window on reality. The assumption was that this could best be done if each person had a 'go' at some form of art work himself. In this way, it was hoped, ordinary people would be able to follow the artist some distance into his world, there to work with his media, to cope with his peculiar difficulties, and perhaps to catch a glimpse of the travail and the ecstasy of creative endeavour. In the evenings the leaders lectured about their arts, and a number of impromptu music and drama listening circles formed. But these activities were essentially supplementary to the main group experiences.

I did not find one person in the school—and discussed the matter with over thirty—who

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**International Seminar, July 28-August 11**

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**Sensory Summer School, August 19-September 2**

**"Values in Conflict"**

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doubted that he had gained in power to appreciate the outlook of the modern painter, the musician, the playwright or the sculptor. One woman told me that she wanted to go on drawing, even though she had never held a brush before coming to Mittagong. 'I want to draw,' she said, 'not because I shall ever produce anything interesting, but because, apart from the satisfaction I get out of it, I know I shall learn more and more about real artists and what they are getting at.' A young man—a New Australian—said: 'I know now I shall never be a sculptor. But I have had an experience of how a sculptor feels, and it has changed my whole outlook.'

This change in outlook was not confined to attitudes to art. A number of people reported that they had gained a new awareness of other aspects of life. Some said that they had always been frightened of certain forms of artistic expression. In overcoming their fears they had grown in personal independence and maturity. Others said that they had gained in self-confidence from the work they had done in the small leaderless sections into which the various groups split up. One of the painting leaders, Desiderius

Orban, was very pleased about these outcomes: he strongly believes that painting compels people to take full responsibility for what they are trying to create. 'I never try to free them from that responsibility', he told me. 'As they see things anew with the eyes of the artist, they are also seeing themselves and their own lives anew.'

All the leaders agreed that they had found their work stimulating, although they were naturally cautious about claiming too much. Actually, the school owed a great deal to the leaders. Apart from their teaching skill, they brought a tough-minded devotion to their arts, which froze out any tendency towards 'arty-craftiness'. No one was molly-coddled, and nobody was falsely flattered. At times the going was hard, and even discouraging; but no one gave in, and all learnt something of the discipline exacted by the arts. They learnt, as one leader frankly said, 'to be happy even in their misery'.

For most people happiness prevailed. The Mittagong school combined all the fun of a good holiday with the serious satisfaction that comes from a genuinely enriching experience.

## Notices

### INTERNATIONALLY-MINDED SCHOOLS

The Conference of Internationally-Minded Schools has developed steadily during the past four years. Originally a group of educationists from several countries was called together by Unesco in 1949. This group set up an international committee which has organized two courses for teachers at Geneva and Ommen, in 1950 and 1952. Reports were drawn up which serve as the basis for future activity. The Conference has members in many European countries and in America, Ceylon, India, Pakistan and Hong-Kong; its affairs are directed by a committee of eight members drawn from seven countries.

A course will be held at the beginning of August at Salem School on the shores of Lake Constance, directed by Mr. K. Millins, Lecturer in Education at Durham University, which will study the neglected opportunities for promoting international understanding through education. Further particulars can be obtained from Mr. F. W. BURTON, Leighton Park School, Reading, Berks.

### UNITED NATIONS ESSAY COMPETITION

#### Winners from ten countries to visit New York

To give people all over the world an opportunity to visit United Nations Headquarters in New York, the United Nations has created ten fellowships, and is organizing an Essay Competition open to men and women aged between 20 and 35 who are keenly interested in the United Nations.

Competitors may choose one of the following two subjects:

- (a) United Nations Technical Assistance and Peace: The Duties of Peoples and the responsibilities of the International Community.
- (b) The Rôle of Non-Governmental Organizations in the Implementation of the Principles of the United Nations.

Full particulars obtainable from the Secretary of your United Nations Association.

### A COURSE ON HUMAN RELATIONS

A group of East London teachers under the chairmanship of Professor J. A. Lauwerys has drawn up an interesting syllabus on Human Relations aimed at the senior pupils of Secondary Modern Schools.

The syllabus is divided into three sections: (a) Getting on with our Neighbours; (b) Getting on with Groups; (c) Getting on with the World. Each section describes detailed projects, visits, activities, fields of study aimed at giving an understanding of co-operative citizenship.

At present three schools are experimenting with this syllabus and as a result of their work an Educational Publisher has commissioned a book on Human Relations for the guidance of teachers. A larger number of experiments in schools would be welcome, however, in order to give the book as wide an appeal as possible. Would teachers interested in seeing the syllabus and, perhaps, in using it in part or in whole, please write to: HALLAM TENNYSON, Ivy Cottage, Coolham, Sussex.



# Directory of Schools

## **PINEWOOD, AMWELLBURY, HERTS.**

Home school for boys and girls 4 to 14.  
where diet, environment, psychology and teaching  
methods maintain health and happiness.

Elizabeth Strachan.

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## **ST. CATHERINE'S SCHOOL, Almondsbury, near BRISTOL.**

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A Public School, founded in 1928, which  
attempts to unite progressive education  
with what is best in the old Public School  
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**FOUR SCHOLARSHIPS (£175—£100),**

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and to boys of good character and all-  
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These awards are tenable for four years.

Full information may be obtained by  
writing direct to the Headmaster.

## **DARTINGTON HALL TOTNES** **DEVON**

*Headmaster :* W. B. CURRY, M.A., B.Sc.

A co-educational boarding school for  
boys and girls from 7-18 in the centre of  
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The school gives to Arts and Crafts,  
Dance, Drama and Music the special  
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Scholarships are sometimes available,  
and further information about these  
may be obtained from the Headmaster.

## **KILQUHANITY HOUSE CASTLE DOUGLAS** **SCOTLAND**

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Established in 1940, Kilquhanity House  
frankly owes its inception to the work of  
A. S. Neill, who now considers it in the  
direct line of his own school and that of  
Homer Lane. It does not, however, cater  
for problem children. In practice there  
is an attempt to combine the traditional  
thoroughness of Scottish education with  
self-government for the pupils. Activity  
methods are used throughout, and the  
teaching staff is qualified to the standards  
demanded by the Scottish Education  
Department, which inspects the school.  
There is ample opportunity for practice  
in all the creative arts. A small mixed  
farm is a fundamental part—as distinct  
from an adjunct—of the school. The  
diet is on food reform lines, though chil-  
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Headmaster: H. B. JACKS, M.A. (Oxon.)

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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## STANDARDS FOR OUR TIME

*James Hemming, Author of 'Teach Them to Live', 'The Teaching of Social Studies in Secondary Schools', etc.*

EDUCATION has three main functions in a democratic society. It has to nourish the inherent capacities of each child; it has to develop the general personal and practical skills necessary for competence in social life, including those needed for earning a living; and it has to help preserve cultural continuity and purpose. Bad education may either fail in all three objectives simultaneously or it may neglect one or more of them. It may also fail because the whole pattern of what is learnt at school is unsuited to the age or situation in which those subjected to it are living—a case in point is the narrow classical curriculum of the local grammar schools in the late nineteenth century which 'led to nothing and was in no demand'.<sup>1</sup>

Educational failure reveals itself in two stages: first, in mal-development of school children—in human waste that is—and, later, by persons who fall short of what is required of them under the tests of living, such as work, marriage, friendship, recreation and participation in government. It is the social *exposure* of inadequacy that gives rise to concern about standards.

As society grows more complex, so do the tasks of education. Each generation of children has more knowledge to master, more varied vocations to prepare for, more ideas to sort out, more diverse relationships to handle. With each era, new needs and new objectives arise. The last century made literacy for all a necessary ideal, while regarding such subjects as history and geography as unnecessary frills; the present century has needed to extend its educational purposes time and time again. Our current aim is, officially, secondary education for all and higher education for the most able. But this latest extension has been necessary not merely in order to provide the skill required to service a technological civilization. We have other, even deeper, needs. For

instance, we have to fight hard to bring up children as social beings in spite of the impersonal hugeness of our mass society; to educate children as cultivated persons in spite of our materialistic age; to give people understanding and breadth in spite of the overwhelming bulk and complexity of contemporary knowledge and the confusion of the contemporary scene; and to promote an overall mental health in an era characterized by widespread emotional instability. The absolute necessity of including these broader social tasks in our educational purposes is being slowly grasped by whole peoples under the relentless impact of the testing times in which we live.

When we remember the increased and increasing complexity of the schools' rôle in society, we can hardly be surprised that they do not fully match up to it. Some young people fail to meet the demands of the times and there is an immediate outcry about poor standards. Inability to read and backwardness in reading are the particular butt of newspapers. Commercial houses criticize the standards in spelling and elementary arithmetic in their recruits. Army educators report startling ignorance in a proportion of those who have passed right through a traditional school course. Professors complain about the narrowness and immaturity of many of the young students entering university. Industrialists deplore that many science graduates who join their companies show both inability to tackle practical problems and a serious lack of general education. From various fields we are told of poor social skill resulting in inability to co-operate—or to lead—effectively. Poor written and verbal fluency in the otherwise well educated comes in for much caustic comment. Lack of zest is another common complaint. 'Why are some recruits to industry inert, unimaginative and dumb, without enterprise or initiative?' asked Sir Edward Herbert at the Federation of British Industries Conference at Nottingham last

<sup>1</sup> Professor R. L. Archer, *Secondary Education in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 1921.



September. He wondered: 'Are we "educating" these qualities out of our young men?'<sup>1</sup> Other complaints condemn the low aesthetic standards commonly to be found in our society.

There is no need to extend the list. What lies behind this spate of criticism is a fear lest the products of our schools and universities fall below the needs of the age. Such a gap would not only be socially inconvenient. When young people fail to meet satisfactorily the tests of life, their self respect, their confidence, and their relationships with others are impaired. This further undermines their capacity for living. If that happened to too many, social vitality and morale would be sapped; civilization itself would begin to stumble. That, roughly, is the situation in which we find ourselves to-day.

There are three possible responses. One is *laissez-faire*—'it will all turn out right in the end'. The second is panic retreat—a desperate attempt to 'regain standards' by putting the clock back. The third is to think anew about educational aims and to reassess standards in terms of prevailing realities. It is obvious that the New Education Fellowship is engaged in the third. Nostalgic glances backwards will not advance the situation; nor will complacency. Let us start by an examination of what we mean by 'standards' in the modern context.

We cannot, of course, use the word to-day in the traditional way. To do so would be to ignore the facts. Originally, the teacher's task seemed quite straightforward. He had something to teach and he had a certain number of years in which to teach it, so he divided his total content arbitrarily into annual chunks and proceeded to do his best to hammer home one chunk each year. Those pupils who kept up with this pace of inculcation, class by class, were considered 'up to standard'; those who lagged behind were 'below standard'. Furthermore, this approach to standards only concerned itself with subjects that could be conveniently divided into annual programmes. Consequently, many less measurable attributes—such as clear thinking—received little attention.

This 'annual chunk' approach to educational planning gave way in due course to another form of error. People began to calculate average attainment—which was a useful thing to do—and

then made the unjustified assumption that the statistical average is the human normal in spite of mounting evidence that 'the normal child' cannot exist in reality since what is 'normal' is for every child to be different from every other child. Both these approaches to setting standards broke down under the impact of studies in human variation and of the broadening conception of what aspects of a child's development are (in whole or in part) the responsibility of the school.

Should we then stop talking about standards altogether? It may be tempting to seek to banish the word from our educational thinking just because certain false ideas have, in the past, become wedded to it. But if we were to banish it, we should certainly have to find some other word to serve in its place, for it is quite clear that *as a society* we need to feed and train definite attributes. We need to reach certain standards of literacy and aesthetic sensitivity if we are to maintain our level of culture; certain standards of specialist knowledge if we are to remain pre-eminent in professional skill, science, invention and technology; certain standards of general education if we are to be a coherent community; certain standards of emotional maturity if society is to be mentally and morally healthy, and so on.

The needs of society and our knowledge of the dynamics of personal growth *together* supply the new outlook on standards that we require to-day. We no longer seek to overstrain or limit children by imposing rigid norms on annual advance: we want the duller to make their best pace without condemnation, and the more brilliant to forge ahead to their hearts' content. But we do need, on the one hand, to attain a definite overall level as a society if we are to thrive culturally and economically, and, on the other, we have to see that each individual is equipped to his personal optimum for a full, satisfying life in the modern world.

These new standards cannot be measured with the mechanical precision of the old, but the schools are, nevertheless, not left completely without ways of assessing their achievement. Failures in social and cultural preparation can be diagnosed by careful observation, while it is not difficult to assess with useful accuracy how far a child is lagging behind his potentialities in particular skills.

But, people may argue, are you not now talking about aims, which are by nature general, rather

<sup>1</sup> *Report of The Conference of Industries and the Universities*, published by The Federation of British Industries, 21 Tothill Street, S.W.1, 1953.



# THE EXPERIENCE OF POETRY IN SCHOOL

Edited by VICTORIA V. BROWN, County Inspector of Schools, Northumberland, and formerly Senior English Lecturer at Exhall Training College, Pp. 204 10s. 6d. net

This new book for teachers is an assembly of articles by various authorities on aspects of poetry teaching in Secondary Schools, with special reference to work in the Secondary Modern Schools. Chapters deal with speaking and dramatizing poetry, writing original poetry, illustrating poetry, and reading and discussing poetry. Many extracts are given from poems suitable for various ages, and there is a sixteen-page supplement of children's own pictures interpreting poems they have read.

The book does not set out either to dictate method or to prescribe content, but is an attempt to share some discoveries which may suggest to other teachers different ways of initiating poetic experience in the children they teach.

*Applications for inspection copies should be addressed to the*

**OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**  
**Education Department - Oxford**

than standards, which should be precise? Educational aims and educational standards are inevitably interrelated. The Oxford Dictionary gives one definition of 'standard' as 'a definite degree of any quality, viewed as a prescribed object of endeavour'. The 'prescribed object' is our educational aim; the 'definite degree of any quality' is the standard in some essential attainment which it is legitimate to expect of a child in view of his combined rôle as person and citizen, bearing in mind his individual variation. This interrelation of aims and standards is a very practical matter. If your social aim for education is simple—as, for example, that every child shall know certain passages of the Koran by heart—then you can attain it without much difficulty. But, as soon as you multiply objectives, you have to face the reality that the standards you expect in any field must be related to the standards you expect in all other fields. That obvious truth would not be worth stating were it not for the fact that, in the past, standards have been set for particular subjects with almost complete disregard for standards in other subjects or in general education. Sane educational planning

will set itself firm standards but it will not forget that you cannot always pay Peter without taking something from Paul.

Under what headings, then, shall we assess standards in modern education? The following list was agreed for a general guide as an outcome of deliberations of the Education Committee of the English Section of the New Education Fellowship, supplemented from time to time by the generous assistance of visiting specialists:

*Group 1. Academic:* The Three R's; general knowledge; specialist knowledge.

*Group 2. Creative and Expressive:* art, music, dramatics, etc.; manual crafts and domestic science; physical education (including hygiene).

*Group 3. Primarily Personal qualities:* clear thinking, zest for life and work, application to tasks, willingness to learn, breadth of interest, initiative, self-reliance, awareness; self-discipline, sense of values, a philosophy of life (moral development); emotional maturity.

*Group 4. Primarily Social qualities:* fluency in communication, a sense of responsibility, sound attitudes to others, including those in authority; social discipline; social skills (courtesy, etc.); co-operativeness.

Such a list clearly has weaknesses. There is overlap between group and group; heading and heading. Again, two distinct types of standard



are included: standards in attainment and standards in personal development. The first can be laid down and evaluated with precision; the second cannot. Of course this list is not rigid or complete. Another committee would probably have shaped it rather differently. Nevertheless, a child who reaches appropriate standards in all the headings listed will be well equipped as person and citizen for life in the modern world—and none of these headings can be neglected without impairing that aim.

This brings us to the problem of 'balance'. Educational standards cannot be considered good if a too intense concentration upon a too narrow field produces high subject standards at the cost of personal development. Nor can they be considered good if essential skills and knowledge are neglected in an over-zealous pursuit of self-expression for the pupil. The supreme educational standard is surely 'wholeness', since the individual's supreme contribution to life is his personal uniqueness, educated and equipped to make its full contribution to the tasks and problems of the age. Such wholeness in the child will be impeded if the curriculum lacks balance. A child needs breadth of knowledge and understanding in order to feel rooted in his community, which he needs to do, and—what is equally important—in order to get himself and his culture into perspective. We can ask of any curriculum: 'Seen as a whole, does this curriculum provide an adequate or an inadequate synthesis for a young person growing up in the modern world?' Standards for our time should, in fact, be applied to the curriculum as a whole as well as to the pupils who follow it.

Similarly, no consideration of educational standards for our time can neglect standards in the community life of the school itself. How good are the pupil-teacher relationships, the parent-teacher relationships, the head-staff relationships, the inter-staff relationships? Is the degree of participation and common purpose high or low? Does every child feel wanted and valued at the school? Such testing questions about community standards are not as vague as might be supposed. Research suggests that, unless special steps are taken to prevent it, about one child in ten is liable to be rejected by his classmates.<sup>1</sup> 'How many isolates are there in this school?' is a question that should be asked to

gauge social efficiency and it can be answered with considerable precision by using simple sociometric techniques. Another useful question of this order is: 'How many of our children show permanent discouragement in their attitude to school life?' Once the *desire* to attain good community standards exists, there need be little difficulty in finding useful yardsticks to apply.

With so much to look at in an investigation of standards for the modern world, one may well wonder where to begin. However, it was decided that, in planning a series of numbers of *The New Era*, the right place to start was with the three R's because they are at present the subject of controversy on all hands. The traditionalists accuse the progressives of not being interested in the three R's at all; the progressives accuse the traditionalists of sacrificing much that is important in education to the attainment of a limited mechanical ability that never blossoms into self-expression. Over all is a gloomy muttering from employers and others about the decline in standards over the past 15 years. A few introductory comments on the three R's may, therefore, be relevant at this stage.

We can safely begin with two assertions:

I.—Children who never attain fluency in self-expression and communication, who cannot read with sufficient ease for comprehension and enjoyment, and who cannot deal with the simple calculations that are an inevitable part of modern life, are not only retarded educationally but are seriously handicapped in personal and social development. Words are the symbols of thought and the essential tools of human communication. Inefficiency in their use isolates an individual from society and leaves him vulnerable to devastating discouragement and to retreat into apathy or anti-social compensation. Facility with words and number, in accordance with his ability, must, therefore, be regarded as of supreme educational importance for every child.

II.—The standard of basic literacy to-day needs to be higher than at any time in the past. Television, radio and talking films, although they may have reduced the social incentive to master the basic skills, have in no way altered the fact that our technological civilization runs on the printed word and on the capacity of people to communicate effectively with each other. A democracy has to be literate. As democracy extends further into our institutions—as is

<sup>1</sup> J. L. Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?* Beacon House, 1934.



happening, for example, in industry to-day—the need for facility with words constantly extends.

No one in his educational senses will, therefore, ever belittle the importance of the three R's in education. Having agreed on that, however, we must take care to be objective about the matter. Those who seek to resist change in education are badly clouding the issue by suggesting that we have to 'go back to the three R's'. We need to ask 'back to when?' When was this educational golden age in which all but the educationally sub-normal children, we are led to assume, learnt to read, write, spell and number competently? One has only to probe a little to find that it never existed. In the past the sub-literate often escaped notice. Between 1921 and 1938, 14·2 of the working population, on average, were unemployed.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, many people of low ability were absorbed by unskilled, menial and low-paid jobs. Post-war Britain is almost fully employed, while low-paid menial work has almost been organized out of existence. These changes mean that many employers are having to make do with recruits of lower calibre than came their way in the 'thirties. Furthermore, we now have conscription—a supplementary testing of literacy of all men at 18. The post-war world has, therefore, brought concealed sub-literacy right out into the open. The broken education of the war years did, of course, produce a decline in attainment, but this is, we hope, only temporary. Our post-war participant democracy needs—and will continue to need—higher standards of

literacy than were ever achieved in the past, *coupled with such personal qualities as self-reliance, reliability, zest for work, alertness of mind and co-operative capacity.* To achieve both will not be easy but the way to achieve it is plain enough: by devising interesting, carefully graded and carefully balanced courses in schools that are themselves vigorous, friendly, purposeful, democratic communities. Those who cry 'back to higher standards' are like generals trying to win new battles with outworn weapons. They can only lead us to confusion and defeat. Our purpose must be to go forward to higher standards of personal and academic development.

I have tried in this preliminary article to show both the need for reassessment of educational standards and that such reassessment is by no means a simple task. I hope that the series of articles to follow may help to probe existing confusions, promote discussion, and so lead a few steps towards a successful outcome. So far as Britain herself is concerned, I feel a particular sense of urgency. Nothing less than a wide-awake, fully literate community will see her through the difficulties she has to surmount in the present and the future. She needs her people to be fully skilled, intellectually, emotionally, socially, morally, culturally and physically. We need to reach sources of morale, co-operation, vitality and purpose hitherto untapped in times of peace. Education alone cannot achieve this; but neither can it be achieved unless the right purposes pervade education. New thinking about standards will help to get these purposes clear.

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Beveridge, *Full Employment in a Free Society*, page 47, Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1944.

## LITERACY THROUGH ACTIVITY

*Nancy Allmark, Headmistress of the Infants' School, St. Stephen's Infant and Junior School, Paddington, London*

OUR school comprises infants' and junior departments. We are housed in an old building, crowded and cramped. This article is chiefly about the infants' department, partly because I know it best, but also because I feel that what goes on there has a great deal to do with whether or not the children become really literate by the time they reach adolescence.

The activity approach has been used in both infants' and junior schools for some years now, indeed the present year is of particular interest to us because the first group of pupils who have learned all the way through by activity methods

have just sat for the grammar school selection examination. Towards the end of the article I shall make a comment on their results. They were good, but we do not want to claim too much from a first return.

I think I should start by outlining what the staff here mean by the much-used word 'Activity'. We aim at four things: to make the best possible use of a child's energy and interests in educating him; to see that he passes on to the junior school able to read and write as well as his capacities permit; to preserve intact the zest for doing and learning which he shews when he joins us at five



years old or slightly younger; and to relate the three R's to the child's general development.

We can see no other way of achieving these objectives simultaneously unless the child plays his full, active part. We know that children develop socially, emotionally and intellectually by discovering, experimenting and doing: that the surest way to help them mature into well-balanced adults is to use *their* experiences as a medium for learning. In order to do so, a child must feel free. Given freedom and a good environment, relationships, and guidance, a child will use his own impulses and interests in order to learn, and will develop as a personality at the rate natural to him—growing, learning, and acquiring skills at one and the same time. To us, these facts are self-evident. They are also, as it happens, supported by a good deal of research.<sup>1</sup> But anyone who comes to the task of teaching children with an open, sympathetic mind will discover them over again for herself.

Of course, this approach to education makes it important that the teacher should know each child as an individual, and should know his parents and his background also, in a way that is less necessary where standardized mass techniques are used. Classes of forty and over make knowing our children extremely difficult. Nevertheless, a good deal can be done, even in difficult circumstances, *provided that teachers really have the will to do it.*

Now let us look at another fundamental question—what do we mean by 'literate'? During the last war it became apparent that future generations of children would have to be educated more generously. If they were to become good citizens, they should be able and keen to read about and understand the ideas and experiences of others and to express their own clearly and vividly. Standardized routines in school can never attain this aim; it can be attained only if the child's own interest is engaged; there is no other way.

What, in practical terms, is the method we adopt in laying the foundations of the vigorous literacy at which we are aiming? First, we believe that language, like any other skill, requires plenty of practice. For most of the day, therefore, the children are free to converse at will. Further, we encourage them to talk to us. When small

children arrive at school in the morning, they are usually bursting with some item of news which they should be allowed to impart to a sympathetic teacher. It may be a birthday or only a bump, but to the child it is important. Talking about what matters to you is good practice—apart from the fact that a small child cannot apply himself to anything else until he has got what he most wants to say off his chest. Moreover, if we seem too impatient or hurried, he will neither express himself well nor be able to turn to other interests.

After the interchange of greetings and news, there follows a long free-play period ('long' for the children; actually it is about 45-60 minutes) when all are free to choose what they want to do and for how long. The choice offered to the youngest children is wide and varied and includes such things as sand, water, clay, paint, woodwork, building bricks, 'dressing-up' things, a Wendy House, and a shop. The older children graduate from free play to constructive activities arising from a communal centre of interest. This period provides good social training: groups form, shy children are helped to play with others, and so forth. But it has a more strictly educative aim; it trains the child in discussing to some purpose, and it provides raw material of experience upon which we base language work later in the day. A child who either cannot or will not read and understand a sentence in a book can readily be induced to read, understand and write a sentence about some very recent experience.

After milk at 10.30 (which we try to make a sociable, pleasant occasion), we have playtime outside from 10.45-11. Then, usually, there follows an hour of English Activities. (I say 'usually' because this period has to come at other times on some days owing to pressure on the one large room we have available. We have no hall.) This period is of immense importance to their reading and writing. In it we cover the more formal side of English work, drawing fully upon experiences still bubbling in the children's minds. For example, we convert material arising from talking about the previous activities into sentences which the children dictate to the teacher, who writes them on the board. Pieces of paper on which these sentences are copied may be stitched together by the teacher to form first reading books. These are kept in a special corner where children can read each other's work. Sharing each other's work is good reading practice and

<sup>1</sup> For example, D. E. M. Gardner's *Testing Results in the Infant's School and Long-Term Results of Infant School Methods* (Methuen, 1942 and 1951 respectively)—Ed.



teaches the infants to adjust to slight differences in word and letter symbols.

Reading and writing thus develop together, though the children also do special writing work. They start by drawing large circles and straight definite lines on large sheets of paper, first with paint brushes and, later, with fat pencils. This leads to making smaller circles and lines, to forming patterns with them, and then to actual letters. From this stage the children progress first to Marion Richardson writing pattern exercises, and then to copying short sentences, as described earlier. Children enjoy these writing activities, often the less intelligent particularly so.

Readiness for reading as well as for writing is promoted by using written words for all sorts of things in the daily life of the class. Common objects are labelled, notices put up, so that from the moment the children enter the school they find themselves in a community where we make words work for us. Very soon the infants are themselves sharing in making the labels and notices.

Since this incidental reading and writing makes a big contribution to the development of basic skills, it may be worth while to go into more detail. After they have learnt to write letters, children make labels for the classroom, such as 'table', 'window', 'shop'. From labelling, we progress to writing simple sentences of description or instruction, such as:

*This is a table.*

*Here we play with sand.*

*Please close the door quietly.*

Only clean hands may handle these books.

Another progression is from games based on action-flash-cards on which are printed single directions: 'run', 'walk', 'jump', 'bring', 'count'. The child does what the card says. At the next stage the teacher combines the action-word with a particular instruction such as:

*Run to the door.*

*Walk to the window.*

*Count the milk bottles.*

Another progression is from single words describing the day's weather—'rain', 'sun', 'snow', 'dry', 'wet'—to keeping a weather diary. Those able to do so also keep a diary about our pets—hamsters only in the infants' school, I am afraid; there is no room to be more ambitious. The children also keep their own individual diaries. These activities keep them keen and busy learning and

using words. Such activities produce great mutual stimulation among the children—a great help to the less able ones. There is always keen rivalry to put up and, later, to write such class notices as:

*It is Peter's birthday to-day.*

*John and Mary are milk waiters.*

These various activities rapidly develop reading readiness. Indeed, we slip naturally from flash-cards used for games to flash-cards and wall-pictures based on our basic reading course—the *Janet and John* books.<sup>1</sup> The moment a child seems ready for it, he is put on to the first book, *Here We Go*. We have selected this particular series of first readers for our central course as the words first introduced are familiar to the child as spoken words, because the incidents which the words describe are interesting to the small child and fall naturally within his experience, and because the pictures are attractive. However, we do not use this series exclusively but have built up class libraries containing other good first readers series, such as Evans' *Activity Readers*, *Beacon* (Ginn), *Happy Venture* (Oliver & Boyd), *Radiant Way* (Chambers), *Kingsway Readers* (Evans Bros.), *Mac & Tosh* (Schofield and Sims), *John and Mary* (Schofield and Sims), *The Gay Way* (Macmillan), *Field Readers* (Ginn), *Happy Way Reading* (Blackie) and others.

Once launched on the readers, the children pass from one to another as they gain facility. We avoid dreary repetition, believing that the more adventurously a child reads the better. That is why we keep a class library. Our more advanced readers choose what books they like from it. Individual reading may take place in English Activity periods but, during the course of the week, special periods are set aside specifically for reading practice: the more able read privately; the ones who need help are coached. We also have occasional poetry and dramatic periods and a daily period when the teacher tells a story. Additional verbal practice is provided by short 'News' periods interspersed throughout the weekly time-table. I should add that we include a certain amount of phonic work. This helps children to work out for themselves what a new word means when they meet it in one of the library books.

I wrote earlier that we consider it to be our job in the infants' department to pass on all children to the junior school reading to the limit of their potentiality. How far do we succeed? We keep

<sup>1</sup> Published by J. Nisbet & Co., Ltd.



records of the actual reading stage reached and compare chronological and reading ages. When the last test was made, 37 of the class were present. Of these:

|    |     |    |     |       |    |     |                 |                       |      |
|----|-----|----|-----|-------|----|-----|-----------------|-----------------------|------|
| 2  | are | at | the | stage | of | the | 1st             | <i>Janet and John</i> | book |
| 6  | "   | "  | "   | "     | "  | "   | 2nd             | "                     | "    |
| 8  | "   | "  | "   | "     | "  | "   | 3rd             | "                     | "    |
| 12 | "   | "  | "   | "     | "  | "   | 4th             | "                     | "    |
| 9  | "   | "  | "   | "     | "  | "   | general library | reading.              |      |

Of the whole group of 37—

Average chronological age: 7.385 years.

" reading age: 7.37 "

We have some reason to believe, therefore, that our teaching methods are on the right lines as

the ratio  $\frac{\text{Reading age}}{\text{Chronological age}} = 1$  is the theoretical

optimum level of attainment in a non-selected sample of the child population and we are short of this by only a small fraction. Although this collective assessment suggests that we are not seriously neglecting any child's potentialities, we do not, of course, depend on it but also watch carefully each child's development as an individual. We have not, so far, found it possible to correlate mental age with attainment on an individual basis.

How about the two children still at the first book stage? We have no accurate record of their intelligence, but these two are obviously poorly endowed. Even so, we believe that they should leave school at 15 with a reasonably useful, though backward, attainment in reading so long as their present interest, application and rate of progress are maintained.

### In the Junior School

How is the activity method of promoting literacy continued in the junior school? Here, also, the core of their work is personal interest, directed, of course, to more mature outlets than the free play materials of the infants' stage.

During the past term, the youngest class in the junior school has had as its centre of interest 'The Circus', arising from Christmas holiday activities. The children have made posters, notices and programmes, composed little poems, made individual 'Circus Books', developed their own dramatization of circus incidents. Writing, painting, constructive work and a great deal of talking have been involved.

The centre of interest of the next class has, this term, been 'The Clothes We Wear'. This has

replaced separate lessons in history, geography and nature study, as well as providing opportunities for all kinds of English work. The children have written away for materials and for information, have procured pictures for their individual scrap books, and have gathered material from reference books in the Public and class libraries. Eight and nine-year-old children are quite capable of such work if they have learnt application and self-reliance at earlier stages.

Procedures in other classes are similar. The top class has been engaged upon a project called 'Peoples of the World'. The class is divided into groups and each group studies the country of its choice and produces its own book on the country. Each group is also writing a play about its country as well as collecting stories, songs and historical events of the country. Many letters have been written. These letters often produce most valuable replies—and some exceptional ones. Last year, a boy from the top class—it was studying London as a project—wrote to Sir Leslie Bowker, the City Remembrancer, for information on traditional ceremonies. Sir Leslie not only replied but came in person to give a talk to the class. I do not cite this in order to encourage other schools to write to the same person. (He is an extremely busy man, which made us all the more appreciative of his kindness.) I mention it as an example of how some public persons are glad to do what they can to help teach young children about the life of their community.

There are in the junior school curriculum many other, more incidental, activities which help children to value English for its day-to-day uses as they have already learnt to do at the infant stage. The children keep nature records—no longer just the labels and sentences of the infant stage but detailed description and information about specimens, aquarium and pets. They record experiments—the growth of beans in light and darkness for instance. The most interesting of these pieces of nature study writing are bound together as the class Nature Magazine. The children keep written records of their own progress in reading and arithmetic. They write passages to describe their own paintings. They keep individual diaries and build individual dictionaries and spelling lists. The senior classes produce class magazines entirely by themselves, as well as class wall newspapers with pictures and comments on current events.



The teacher's rôle in this incidental English is to stimulate, guide and encourage. We sometimes hang up provocative sentences and challenging statements designed to set the children thinking and finding out. Good standards are maintained by the keenness with which the children emulate each other's best. Suggestions and corrections from the staff are welcomed because the children want to produce good work. They do not just *accept* our help, they are positively *grateful* for it. Good, clear writing is valued socially because it is easy to read. The teachers, in fact, are all the time working with the children's own eager desire to improve. The children do not work hard to please the teachers only, but because they and their group have set themselves a high standard of excellence

Of course, we take especial pains with the less able or they may be cut off from a sense of achievement because their standard of attainment is comparatively low.

At the junior stage there are no set reading books. The children choose their own from a carefully-graded library. To help them in their attack on new words, we do give some formal teaching of phonics. Children enjoy this because they see its value. Comprehension is tested regularly by work sheets.

The rudiments of grammar and punctuation are taught in relation to function. The children learn to identify 'name words' and 'doing words'. We teach the elements of punctuation from their own books—including 'comics'. (We find they soon grasp the use of inverted commas if we tell them that 'anything which would go in a speech balloon in a comic must be put in inverted commas when you write it down.') We sometimes use dictation as a test of spelling. We also use the English Work Books published by Ginn—children work through these at their own pace. It will be seen that our whole aim is to enable children to write useful and interesting things, to find out what they need to know, to read with enjoyment. But we include a certain amount of formal teaching which the children can themselves see that they need if they are to attain the standards *they* desire in their activities.

Does it work? We believe it does. We believe that all our children are striving and developing whereas traditional formal methods would have turned some of them into discouraged 'backward children'. We measure and check our attainment

as well as we can, using standardized tests, and average attainment has steadily improved. We have now been using activity methods in both infant and junior departments for five years. Our present top class have, therefore, had no other kind of schooling. Our present entrants do better than our previous ones although the type of children we have, the pattern of tests used and the proportion of grammar school places available have remained the same. I would like to give figures but am not allowed to do so. However, the following combined English and Arithmetic average marks for our top junior school class in standardized tests administered each February by ourselves give an indication of the general upward trend:

|               |      |      |      |      |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|
| Year:         | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 |
| Average mark: | 71.4 | 87.9 | 91.5 | 91.3 |

This year's figures show a slight recession. They may mean that we are *approaching* the 'ceiling' in terms of the capacities of our children. On the other hand, the junior school was evacuated throughout the Christmas Term of 1952 owing to building repairs. This upheaval may have pulled down this year's standards. Our own view is that we must never rest content but must look carefully at what we are doing and how the children are responding to it. We believe that we have found the right road towards improving simultaneously standards of social, personal and scholastic development. We believe, further, that the three are interdependent and that by refining our existing methods we can stabilize and improve on the advances already made. We have been at it too short a time to make any dogmatic claims; but we are very hopeful and, I think, have some reason to be so.

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# STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS OR FOR CHILDREN?

*E. M. Churchill, Senior Lecturer in Education at the City of Leeds Training College*

**H**ow can I know whether the standard of work being achieved by my children is satisfactory? What should a child be able to achieve in the three R's before he leaves the Infant School? What kind of sums should he be able to tackle successfully before he leaves the Junior School? How can I know that I am on the right lines?

This demand for a yard stick against which teachers can measure the success of what they are doing is constantly voiced in these days by conscientious teachers who sincerely desire to be assured that they are doing their best for the children. The demand has been more vocal recently owing to the challenge thrown out by members of the public, and to reactionary trends evident within the teaching profession.

It seems necessary, therefore, to consider whence this demand arises, and whether it is possible to give teachers more explicit guidance than is given at present. A few Local Authorities have issued a statement of Minimum Attainments in response to repeated requests from teachers; others feel that there are grave dangers attached to suggestions of this kind.

What follows is one teacher's contribution to this problem. No doubt much of what is said will be a matter for controversy and it is hoped that others may take up the challenge in further contributions.

I believe this desire for standards and yard sticks to arise from a deep-seated need for approval. It seems to me that in our asking we are not unlike the small child in the Reception Class who brings his paintings to the teacher to see what she will say about them. For him the teacher stands in the parental rôle and it is vitally necessary for him to know what kind of thing she likes, as he desires fervently to stand well with her. He will, if she allows him, accept quite uncritically her judgment of what is good, and will give her as many pictures as she will accept of the kind to which she has set her seal of approval. One can see at this level how easy it is for the teacher to curb imagination and cramp spontaneity, though she may be quite unconscious that her comments have that effect.

In the same way, it is true of many adults that they still need someone, or some authority, to stand towards them in the parental rôle; to tell them what is good, what they should aim at, what standards they should attain to. For many of us examinations have provided the yard stick, and it is not insignificant that since the Grammar Schools were relieved of this to a certain extent, there has been a cry from some for a reversion to the old system. Some teachers seek for the parent in the H.M.I., and wait for his visits to know whether what they are doing is satisfactory or not. It may be that some inspectors are happy to assume this rôle, but I think it would be truer to say that more often we thrust the rôle upon them.

It would be foolish to pretend that this is the whole explanation of the demand for standards, but if we do not accept the fact that the demand is in part an expression of our own unconscious, we shall be in no position to examine the desirability of standards from the objective point of view.

Undoubtedly one of the reasons for this demand is that for the last few years we have been re-orientating our approach to education, particularly in the Infant School. Many teachers feel that the time has come to re-examine the assumptions underlying the new approach and consider them in the light of our experience. How does the attainment of children in these schools compare with the attainment of children educated in the traditional manner? Even if we are not by nature self-critical, the judgments expressed by members of the public, in the courts, in Parliament, and in the Press would cause us to look at our methods and consider where there is any justification for the assumption sometimes made that teachers are responsible for illiteracy and juvenile crime. The fact that much of what is said is the irresponsible comment of members of the public who have to find a scapegoat for the social problems which exist does not excuse us from the responsibility of re-examining our premises from time to time.

There are signs already of a reactionary movement among educationists themselves, and it is



vitally necessary just now that teachers should be convinced in their own minds about the rightness of what they are doing. There is a danger that at a time such as this, when our approach is being challenged, we should revert to the old pattern. This is the child's way of reacting to disapproval. There is no reason to retrace our steps just because we have not always put our principles into practice successfully, or because we have expressed these principles in language which is not always clear and is sometimes risible. We must be able to learn from the great thinkers or teachers of the past, but the only justification for going back to the more formal methods of education would be if we were convinced that the levels of achievement in all aspects of personality development were higher under the traditional system.

To provide an education in which learning proceeds through activity and experience is not nearly so easy as it sounds. It lays a responsibility on the teacher which has not always been realized by those who are trying to put the principle into practice. In some cases the criticism behind the remark that children seem to do nothing but play in school is justified because there has not been sufficient thought given to providing for activity and experience which is really challenging, particularly to children from cultured homes and to children of more than average ability. Unless 'play' becomes a means through which skills are being developed, an understanding and appreciation of the world around being enlarged, and the special gifts of imagination being challenged, then the parent who feels there is not much point in sending his child to school might be justified.

Of course teachers know that play activities are a means through which emotional and social needs are met, and through which growth towards maturity can be fostered. They know, too, that children do not distinguish between work and play as adults do. But unless we are quite sure that the intellectual abilities are being fully active in the play then something is wrong. Someone said recently, 'There is an awful opportunity for the escapist in the freer methods of to-day.' That is true, and every teacher should realize it. It is our responsibility to see that children develop the ability to settle down to a job of work and to complete it to the best of their ability. It is our responsibility also to see that they begin to realize

that sometimes they have to apply themselves to tasks which are not so intrinsically interesting to them. There are children who for one reason or another will not tackle the learning task unless their attention is demanded by the teacher. One has, of course, to understand the reason for 'laziness' in any particular child and approach the problem in the light of this knowledge, but this does not mean that we allow him to continue to waste the opportunities school life has to offer.

It is significant that when people speak of standards of attainment they usually mean attainment in reading, writing and number, but it is vitally important to consider attainment in all realms of personal achievement, otherwise we are in danger of fostering some aspects of personality development at the expense of others. Social achievements, emotional maturity, physical skills, intellectual interest, creative expression are as much part of the picture of attainment as are reading ability, handwriting, spelling, and facility in calculation.

If this is so then perhaps these are some of the questions we might ask ourselves:

Are the children developing a sense of social responsibility?

Have they begun to discipline their own natural desires for the sake of the group?

Are they able to make a contribution to the community as well as taking what it has to offer?

Are they developing self-confidence?

Are they beginning to be able to evaluate the quality of their work, or do they rely entirely on the teacher to give them a sense of achievement?

Are they beginning to form their own moral judgments or is their behaviour determined by their desire for approval or fear of punishment?

Are they showing curiosity in relation to the world around them?

Are they discovering ways of satisfying this curiosity through observation and the use of books?

Is casual delight and 'sight seeing' developing into habits of sustained observation and critical appreciation?

Have they begun to enjoy reading and to discover some of the delights of our literary heritage?

Have they begun to discover that books are a means by which we can discover the answers to things we do not know, and a means of adding to our knowledge?

Are they developing the same facility in written expression which they show in other forms of communication? Is this an expression of experience which has been felt as well as thought about?

Have they begun to understand some of the quantitative relationships which we need to understand in order to carry out so many of the activities of everyday life?

Are they able to use their knowledge to solve the practical problems of everyday life which involve these relationships?

Even when we put the problem of assessment in this wider context we must be aware of the



pitfalls. Intellectual growth is a matter of the interaction of inherited abilities, which are developing throughout school life, with the experiences and opportunities which are offered by the environment. The same is true also of the factors which influence emotional and social development. It is also true of physical development. Children vary greatly both in their inheritance and in the richness of their environment, and therefore the attainment of each child can only be measured fairly against the standard of which he is capable. As soon as we have said this it becomes obvious that we are not in a position, and probably never will be, to make such a judgment with any degree of accuracy, and we may do grave injustice to a child by demanding a certain standard of attainment simply because he is of the same chronological age, or mental age, or with a comparable home background as another child who is reaching this standard. What we can and should do is to satisfy ourselves that we are doing all we can to make progress possible and that each child is on the move.

Another danger in standards fixed according to the attainment of children of average ability is that those below this level will be forced to work at a pace which is beyond their capacity and will in consequence suffer the frustration of constant failure which may in time rob them of all joy in learning. At the other end of the scale it is possible that those with exceptional ability will never have these abilities challenged by their school work and this may lead to boredom and lack of effort.

Every teacher with some years of experience in different schools knows that the level of attainment reached by the children is influenced not only by the quality of the teaching in the school, but by the children's social environment. If she does not accept this both she and the children suffer from constant frustration, and the joy of co-operative learning and the sense of purpose and achievement which result are lost.

Is there then no yard stick for the teacher? I think the answer is no, if it is being asked for in the form of a statement of standards of attainment in school subjects. As teachers we must be prepared to *accept responsibility for our own convictions* and develop the habit of assessing for ourselves the success of our approach. This means that we must be aware of our own standard of values. If we are fully aware of these we can

look for signs that they are finding expression in the behaviour of the children. Perhaps some of these signs are to be found in their responsiveness to new experiences; in their capacity for delight in beauty; in their ability to think independently, to use initiative and to co-operate; in their enjoyment in experimenting, exploring and discovering; and in their skill in handling the tools of communication. The order in which these have been listed is intentional. Far too often we ask children to be creative and to communicate without first making sure that we are nurturing the creative spirit and that they are having experiences which seem to them worth while communicating.

We must learn how to feel free to follow our own intuitive judgments, to be spontaneous and experimental in the delicate task we have undertaken. We must be flexible enough to adapt our methods as our understanding of child nature grows and we must be humble enough to learn from others; but we cannot be taught how to do our job by people who have not got the knowledge of how children feel, think and learn which we can have if we are making good use of our daily experience with them. Nor should we allow ourselves to be frightened into retreat by people who know so little about what goes on in Infant classrooms to-day as to confuse freedom with licence and chaos, and who seem to assume that in these days the teacher has relegated her responsibilities to the children.

It is natural for man to dislike being in a state of uncertainty and doubt but we have to recognize that 'tension is an essential feature of the formative processes in man' (Whyte). As Keats said, 'There is a quality of "negative capability" which is essential to the Man of Achievement. It is the power of being in uncertainties, mysteries and doubts, without any irritable reacting after fact and reason.' It is the attitude which Wordsworth describes as 'a wise passiveness'. It is the attitude which every creative artist has to cultivate; without it he loses the capacity to respond to Truth and Beauty. Perhaps this is what Froebel meant when he said that 'education in training and in all instruction should be far more passive and following than categorical and prescriptive.'

Throughout this article we have recognized the need felt by adults and children alike for some criteria of judgment. This necessity arises from a fundamental human need for both appreciation



and criticism, without which we do not feel secure. We have been concerned to see how the teacher can deal with this at his own level, but as teachers we must recognize that we have to meet this need in children. If either, or both, are withheld the self-confidence and emotional maturity, which develop where there is a sense of acceptance, may be retarded. Too often we do children an injustice, either by offering them a facile appreciation or by the frequency of our criticism. The teacher has to decide when to give and when to withhold,

as well as how to give. He can only do this by developing in himself the ability to wait and by learning to trust his own intuitive judgments. As Schiller said, 'There is a necessity in education for a kind of active indifference, a state of fruitful equilibrium. If a teacher is to gain true expression for his pupils he must be capable of being in this state.' The ability to hold to standards within a flexible method is thus seen to be a reflection of the teacher's own personality, because it is the outcome of his ability to deal with himself.

## BASIC SKILLS AND MUCH BESIDES

*Jessie Horsbrugh, Headmistress, Sherwood County Primary School, Mitcham, Surrey*

EDUCATION seems to be the butt of much grumbling in the daily press and elsewhere at present, and the words that most usually voice this grumbling are 'falling standards'. Teachers may resent the grumbling or ignore it because they feel that the words no longer have any very precise meaning in an educational system that sets out to educate each child according to his age, aptitude and ability. What they cannot easily do is to recognize the real and legitimate anxieties that may well lie behind the criticism, nor even admit that they themselves have their own anxieties about how best to carry into practice the aims embodied in the 1944 Education Act.

In order partially to meet this difficulty, I have been asked to describe a County Primary School which has a broader aim than drilling children for speed and accuracy in the three R's and yet where most of the children do achieve these skills.

### Two 'Musts' in the Junior School

I believe there are two essentials to the Junior School teachers' work: first, they must be prepared to teach the basic skills—if need be from the very beginning—and go back and test the foundations *throughout the Primary School course*. If they do not know fully how to do these things, then the Local Education Authority should provide courses for them, and the whole staff should be ready to help each other in perfecting their teaching skills; secondly, there must be real co-operation and continuity between those who teach children, particularly perhaps the less-gifted children, throughout their ten years of schooling. This means that the Junior School

teacher must try to establish really friendly relationships both with the Infants' Schools which 'feed' his school and with the various Secondary Schools to which his children will be going on.

It has always been assumed that it is the rôle of the Infants' School to teach the child to read and of the Junior School to give him practice in reading. If we are to admit, as we do to-day, that children are individuals and vary greatly in the pace at which they learn, then it is clear that what was once someone else's task is now often the vital concern of the Junior School teachers also. They have in quite a number of cases to teach the actual reading skills, and in all cases to extend the child's use of things. Ability to do this is part of their professional competence. But what matters most of all is their attitude of mind—a change of heart from 'This has never been my job' to 'I am vitally concerned and must find out how best I can deal with the problem'. In a large Junior Mixed/Infants' School, reading, for example, is the business of everybody and all learn from the experience of others. It can, of course, be tackled by withdrawing the slower children from their own classes (so breaking many friendships and interrupting social learning) and settling them down to learning nothing but the three R's and cutting out the 'frills'. This would meet the demand of a good many parents and other citizens that education should return to the 'good old days'; yet were the days so good from the point of view of literacy? If parents' notes are to be taken as an index, many must have left school in the not too distant past with a very small degree of skill in writing and spelling.



The question of continuity and co-operation between schools of all degrees is of paramount importance. The child grows naturally, and to make a sudden attempt to speed his growth when he reaches a new school without investigating the previous training often stops or retards this very growth which one wants to speed up. All the way through life, we tend to find that when a new phase of living begins, those in charge despise, in a small way, what has gone before. Schools get 'half-baked teachers', colleges get 'immature adolescents', grammar schools get 'semi-literate scholarship children' and the Junior School gets 'infants that know nothing'—or so they all lead us to believe. Let us take it for granted, for a change, that what has been done previously may have been well done in the light of the children's immediate needs—that the Junior School entrant, for example, who cannot read may possibly have laid foundations of confidence and interestedness in the Infants' School without which he never could have learned to read. Understanding and goodwill is relatively easy in a Primary Department with juniors and infants; it requires a real effort when there are two or more schools feeding the same Department, but it is none the less necessary.

### Organization and Time-Table

There are 450 children in this school, divided into nine classes of fifty, because there are nine classrooms. The classes are called by colours, not numbers, and the grading is done exactly according to age unless there are very serious reasons for exceptions. The class is a family social unit and, since all basic work is done in groups, learning to each child's full capacity does not create any great difficulties. The bright child is not kept back and neither is the duller child pushed so quickly that he loses confidence; but they all play and work together at such things as Games and Scripture where their knowledge and achievement may be more or less on a level. In their classrooms, fitted throughout with chairs and tables, the children are usually grouped according to reading ability. During the last two years, the classes go into sets for Arithmetic, graded according to ability after the setting of a basic test. These groups are not rigid and there is much reviewing of work and co-operative discussion between the teachers taking the sets. At the moment 156 children are divided into five

groups—a bright one of about thirty, a slow one of about fifteen, and three average groups. This grouping seems to me to be both possible and desirable for Arithmetic, but not for English which is so much a part of all Junior School activities.

A great deal of real Nature Study is done since the school lies near a common which is rich in bird life as well as having a pond and quite a varied flora. Nature Study is all done in groups—each group working on an assignment of work as part of a school scheme. Much emphasis is laid on careful observation and thorough work which is seen to be important whether the teacher is there or not. Recording observations—and these *are* actual observations, not dictated notes—and consulting reference books are an essential part of the scheme. All this leads to useful reading, correct spelling and much understanding of the use of writing. The habit of using good reference books is cultivated from the very beginning, so that the children know from the start how to acquire knowledge through their own efforts.

The time-table also includes, each week, a period of one hour's Children's Time, when they are encouraged to choose and to work out their own ideas. It is often during this time that, of their own free will, basic skills are practised; so are skills learned in ordinary handwork lessons. When a questionnaire was set to the top class on things liked and disliked, one new boy wrote 'I hate Children's Time. You have to think for yourself and I don't like that.' Some children like to take refuge in being dictated to always—so do some adults. It is the thinking purposeful citizen we require in the present-day world.

During the winter months Clubs are run on one afternoon a week. They are based on special interests of the staff, and so are very varied, including music, art, pottery, basketry, weaving, nature, games and country dancing, and so on. Notices about these are posted up and discussed by the children who then vote at the beginning of the year for their first and second choice. From these votes the groups are formed, having regard to the numbers which can be fitted into a specific group. These clubs cater for a cross-section of all children over the age of eight. This gives the teachers opportunities for getting to know all the children and affords the children the chance to choose for themselves one thing they are especially interested in and which they



have to stick to till Easter. At the end of this time a short display and exhibition is held to show what has been achieved during this time. The results are astonishing and give only one more proof of what can be accomplished when a vital interest is met and the numbers in a group are round about thirty.

School visits and journeys are another part of the time-table (these being closely linked with the use of visual aids, geography, history and nature study). They are prepared with care, carried out with the minimum of fuss and give rise to a great deal of written work and use of reference books. They are chosen having regard to the children's needs and interest and are often designed to fill in the necessary background for children who live on a large prefabricated estate. One very successful one was to Canterbury—a complete change of surroundings, when music, art, literature, geography, history and simple architecture all had their place during the six months' course of preparation.

In the summer term, fifteen of the senior children are going with me and one other member of the staff to Albury, a small village in the county. They will go to the village school, explore the surrounding country and the beautiful old County Town, and live with some of the school children. Their hosts will be coming to Mitcham to live with them for four days later in the term and we are planning to shew them something of London. Our children have already spent one day at Albury in preparation for this visit, and are busily at work planning and preparing for it. School visits of this local kind seem to me much the most suitable for Junior School children, and an excellent preparation for journeys abroad once they are at their secondary schools.

As they are meant to do, all these branches of work enlarge the children's experience while adding to their knowledge through the use of the basic skills. They demand real effort and perseverance from the child, with a self-discipline which will be of inestimable value to him when he faces the modern world as an adult.

### Reading, Speech and Writing

It is by the use of reading and English throughout the entire Junior School day and life that the improvement comes. The skills certainly need explanation, practice, often remedial work, but it is their application to everything a junior child

does that renders them effective. One does not learn to cook by obtaining a diploma, setting it up in a frame on the wall and then never entering a kitchen again.

*Reading:* One of the things that proves most valuable is the use of walls and screens for notices and pictures, in fact for a variety of written material. The main points appear to be that the things used should be interesting and attractive, well-lettered (but not so exquisite that no-one can ever bear to take them down!) and changed frequently. In this school at first, children tended to ignore notices until ones such as: '*If you read this, ask me for a sweet*' began to appear. The lists for outings and activities such as swimming were put up to be signed and once the lists were closed, the results were final. Children had to take the consequences of not reading or not noticing, and many mothers missed school functions because they had been unable to get tickets through their children. It may have seemed a hard lesson but it was an important one that has not had to be re-learnt. It is now tradition. There are also many things in the corridor, boxes of cards with suggestions for Children's Time, for pictures to draw or paint, pages of notes on topical events, and so on.

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A school library has been established and is of great value because it is constantly used in connection with all subjects. The books are simply classified according to subject, looked after by child librarians, cared for but often handled. It is common to have a library. It is not so common for it to be well and truly useful.

*Speech:* One of the most important parts of a Junior School child's life is speech, and it is one that has often been neglected in the past. Speech training lessons yes, but speaking—very seldom! One has only to go to any meeting or conference and listen to the people asking questions or answering arguments to realize this. Junior children, if given the chance, can speak a great deal in the right way, weighing up points with skill and often finding reasons for things that have been quite overlooked by adults taking part in the discussion. One small example of this came up when a class taking Assembly turned the order of the act of worship round and arranged the reading at the end 'because then the children are sitting down quietly, ready for the notices'. Events and things around often cause the children to talk, yet this has been repressed. Then we complain that the present-day child is apathetic. Children here act as guides in the school when our many foreign visitors come, and all are astonished at the wealth of detail which they point out on their rounds.

*Writing:* Yet communication through speech does not always lead to writing, and juniors do need opportunity and incentive to write. Writing is both a craft and a means of communication, and is treated as such. The children use ink at first in Children's Time, when they experiment with pens and coloured inks in pattern work. Then when the pen is a familiar tool, they use it first for actual writing lessons and then for their work. They often display for our pleasure, pieces of writing by a whole class, and they are highly

critical, although in a friendly way, of their own and others' efforts. They are also taught to look back at their own first efforts and to say, we hope, 'How much better this is'. We asked some of the ten-year-olds to write their own school reports this term, and were most encouraged by the justice, good sense and self-knowledge they betrayed in assessing their own work, interests and social behaviour. Writing is not only a skill, therefore; it is also a means of communication, linked with speech work.

Each class takes over one week's Assembly in a term, taking hymns, readings, choral speaking of pieces such as the Beatitudes or dramatic work such as in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Notes are written to me to inform me of the plan of the Assembly and also to the teacher who is playing the hymns. All school outings are reported orally, artistically and in written form. Competitions are run on Fridays in all aspects of Junior School work—reading aloud, poetry, talks on hobbies, table bees. The winners are chosen and often critized by the children themselves. Letters of all kinds are written—but they are necessary ones. They include letters enquiring about coaches; about trains, etc. for outings; letters of thanks to coach drivers, to people who have shewn the children round, to those who have prepared their meals, to children and staff who are ill—in fact on every occasion when writing is really useful. One here now reads: 'I hope you will soon get well. I know how sore it is to have an "olser" in your throat. It must be horrid. Let us forget the troubles and talk about Spring'—this from a girl of nine to an absent member of staff.

### Arithmetic

So far no mention has been made of Arithmetic as such. This should surely be planned so that it is related to the particular needs of the children and according to their ability. This does not mean only enough Arithmetic for football pools or newspaper competitions. Maybe in the 'good old days' Junior children did do problems about taps running into sinks with no plugs in, but people also had many time-wasting inconveniences to put up with, such as flat-irons heated on the embers! No one would suggest returning to these, so why in school there is this constant harping on 'We always used to do' no one can tell. Of course, we all draw strength from the



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past and its tradition, but a slavish conservatism (non-political!) over anything without reason is unworthy of an Elizabethan age. The children need practical handling of money, of weights, of capacity, of length, and of time, besides numbers. They enjoy problems and therefore learn rules to deal with them. In other words, the reason is there for the arithmetical work. Arithmetic is utilitarian except for some advanced children who will take pleasure in the science of numbers. It needs a plan and a place, but only a place; not a special one. We have to prove to a child who says 'Why learn that? My dad's just invented a machine to do it much more quickly' that what he learns will have its uses even if they are not quite clear to him at the actual moment, but it must not be for a mythical use, in this age of machines. The plan here has been mentioned previously under the heading of 'Time-table'.

#### **Parent-Teacher Co-operation**

Here might be the moment to mention co-operation with the parents. They do so often seem to gloss over their own personal achieve-

ments and we so often hear them say 'I could do twice as well as this at his age'. How distance lends enchantment! Others think they were better for severity or even harshness and seem to deplore the fact that their children like, even beg, to go to school. One even said: 'They can't make him work at school; he actually likes it'. Surely this is a reflection on our present-day standards, that to like and appreciate one's work is to show oneself to be an oddity and even to be suspected of idling. Parents also tend to compare one child in the family with another and do not very often try to understand how much their children differ from each other. They look to class lists and places, and yet they fail to notice that John has gone up three places, not because of his efforts but because the three friends above him have obligingly got mumps.

It is here that real understanding between parents and teachers helps; if they trust each other, so much can be done. Parents' Handicraft evenings are held here each week, besides a monthly social or education meeting. During these evenings, over basketry and dress-making,



those personal contacts are made which do so much to foster the happiness and progress of the children. We have to show and prove to the parents that progress is being made, to point out that a slower start does not necessarily mean that the child will always be retarded; figures tend to show that great improvements come, with present-day methods, between the ages of seven and nine. It is natural for a parent to want his child to get on, but our task as teachers at the moment is to see that gossip and rumour are to some extent nullified by a clear explanation of what is actually happening in schools to-day.

Parents need to feel once again that the school is a centre of learning for their children, looked after by people who are understanding and human while being knowledgeable. Their interest is very real, their concern genuine, and it is up to us to act as public relations officers between our work and them. It means harder work, not an

easement for teachers, when we train our children to think for themselves by giving them time of their own to use by our guidance, wisely and for things of value.

### Conclusion

These ways of using the three R's in the Junior School do, as James Hemming says, 'nourish the inherent capacities of the individuals . . . provide an equipment for earning a living in the world of to-day, and . . . preserve cultural continuity'. The pattern is suited to the age and situation; it will, in the end, produce in this country a fully alive literate community. Let us therefore remember the words of Thomas Jefferson, 'I steer my bark with hope ahead and fear astern' and believe too, that even if our 'standards' are slightly different from those of the past, they are really fitted for the task we have in hand. If we expect the best, children will certainly give it to us.

## JUNIORS AND THEIR EDUCATION TO-DAY

*Lilian Pierotti, Principal, Bedford Training College*

THE question of standards in education involves consideration not only of what standards should be but, even more important, of what is the purpose of having standards at all. Is the standard to be the production of a well-developed and balanced personality, a good citizen, a faithful worker, a leader, a follower—an individual capable of honest, independent thought and action, or a pair of hands in office or workshop? The present criticism of the behaviour and achievements of children, that is to say, the criticism of their education in all types of school and in their own homes, seems wholly superficial in that it disregards this wider question and merely concentrates on the immediate results, before the children's powers come to fruition.

The critics are judging from a past that has not, if the truth be told, produced such a very satisfactory present that they need be complacent about their own achievements. To-day the pattern of life has changed and this gives rise to a difference of emphasis if not of aim in education. Life to-day is more complex and difficult for adults than it was for the last generation when lines of conduct were more narrowly and, therefore, more clearly defined. How much greater then are the demands made upon immature

minds which have to face this complex society. They have to be helped to develop standards of conduct that are not merely imposed upon them but are so much a part of themselves that they will withstand the assaults that will inevitably be made in later life.

No one would deny the desirability of some measure of attainment in the three R's; but does this necessarily mean that every child leaving the Primary or Secondary school should be required to reach a definite standard of attainment; if so, what should that standard be? It seems to me that the aim of education is not solely to produce 'literate' beings—after all, we are given to understand that Shakespeare was not even consistent in the spelling of his own name—but to develop an individual mind with a moral attitude towards life.

Looking back over a long teaching career, I cannot remember a time when employers failed to complain about the standards of education of youth and the poor attainments of adolescents. Similarly, there were always some teachers in Grammar and Secondary Schools who criticized the level of attainment of children entering their schools at the age of eleven plus, and some teachers in Junior Schools who were appalled at the ignorance of the seven-year-olds. Such



criticism has been at times more vociferous and at others less so, but its justification was uniformly doubtful. During the last twenty to thirty years much time, thought and research have been devoted to improving the processes of education in schools, for no other reason surely than to secure better results, both in terms of the three R's and also in the development of children as happy and stable personalities, giving service to the community according to individual ability and taking a full share in responsibility for it. People who look back honestly to the schools of 1910-1920 would have to admit that the work produced by children to-day is broader in conception, more alive, makes greater demands upon intellectual powers and is, therefore, fundamentally of a better quality. It goes far beyond the confines of a rigid school syllabus of the past; it includes practice of the three R's to a higher degree with less drudgery than during my early teaching years. In addition, the children's participation in community life, their poise and social habits, are infinitely better.

There are people who seem to advocate drudgery as a discipline for life, but if they would observe the high degree of concentration and determination evinced by a child in carrying out a simple repetitive process of his own choosing, or in attempting a highly complicated one beyond his powers, they might perhaps realize that the self-discipline involved is more lasting and, therefore, a more valuable acquisition than any discipline imposed by authority.

The purpose of writing is to convey an idea, but those who so often write in the daily press extolling their own penmanship or that of their generation in their early years, seldom seem to give evidence of having used this skill for its primary purposes. Rather, they remind one of the man who used to engrave the Lord's Prayer on a sixpenny piece—a wonderful piece of work, but one could only read it because one knew the Lord's Prayer!

In my own school the usual time-table of short periods for each lesson and the limited syllabus of work were abolished and attempts were made to allow children to work at their own pace and to realize gradually the importance of the need to master each step before proceeding to the next.

As the need arose they were helped and guided by the teacher who would suggest ways of meeting difficulties in construction, and of finding information wanted for specific purposes. Help was also given by other children who had themselves met similar problems, and so group responsibility and co-operation were gradually developed. They were fostered still further by certain forms of group work, for example, in getting to know the names, details of construction and other information regarding ships and shipping in the London Docks; the dates of arrival and departure, the length of journeys, destinations and the cargoes carried. Such information, gained as a result of personal interest and investigation, gave a broader and sounder basis for history, geography and detailed calculation than would be gained from a traditional syllabus for class lessons. Further, the children learned how to learn, how

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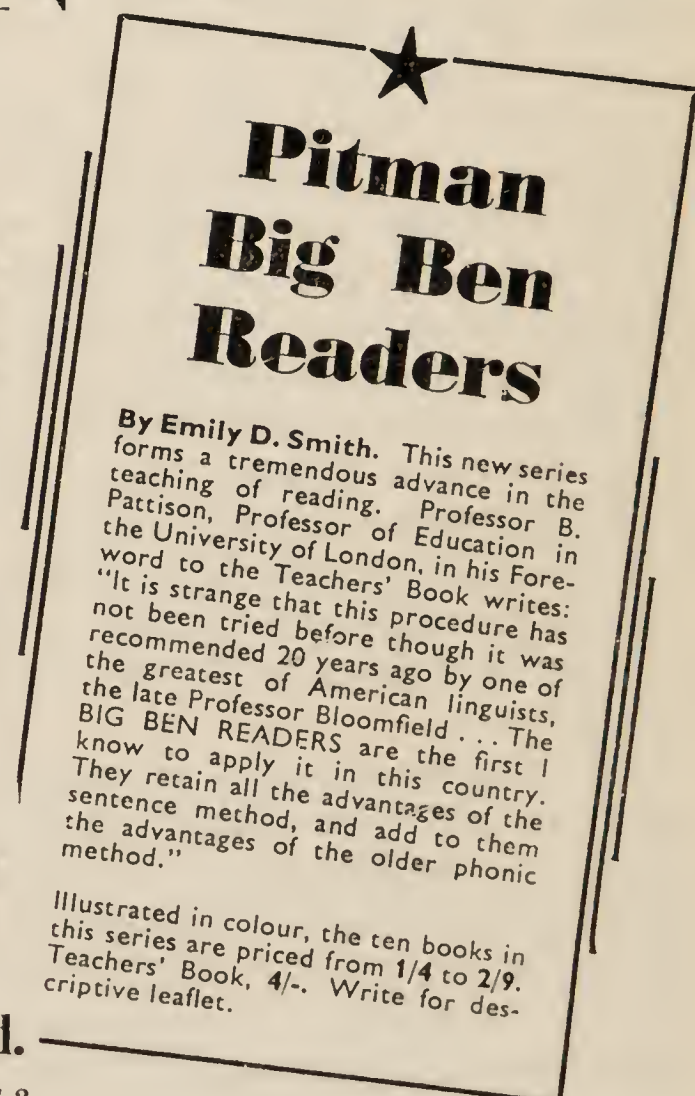
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to acquire information, how to use it and record it, and were encouraged in an attitude of enquiry and investigation towards objects and situations in their daily lives. The surroundings and the organization were planned to stimulate and promote growth, to afford opportunities for effort, and enable children to acquire habits, skills, knowledge and attitudes of mind which would help them to live free, happy and useful lives. There was ample scope for natural activity and the desire to know, and also to do things well physically; but above all, there was the freedom which allowed for personal experience and investigation.

The integration of the curriculum which this entailed occurs most easily and naturally under conditions free from constraint; and the break-away from traditional and conventional education in a Junior School allowed opportunities to acquire knowledge in history, geography, science, various arts and crafts, as well as written and spoken language and mathematics. The information gained in this way may not perhaps easily be measured by examination results in the early stages, but it did undoubtedly give children a wide background to knowledge which stood them in good stead at eleven years of age and later. It helped them to read fluently and with understanding, for they had to have recourse to books to gain necessary information; they wrote because in various ways they recorded things seen and discovered; they measured and they calculated. Finally, they practised with diligence and enthusiasm skills of all kinds for reasons which they themselves fully understood, including the desire to pass to a Secondary School.

Whatever the merits or failures of this method of approach, the results of the examination at eleven plus years of age were considerably higher than the average for the number of children transferred to Grammar Schools and, under the earlier methods of transfer, to selective Central Schools.

It is unfortunate that no long-term records appear to have been made of the progress and successes of children, as well as their failures, in schools where the traditional class methods of instruction have been replaced by others more objective in approach. It is, however, a fact that because the children worked at their own pace and pursued individual lines, the abler among them worked to their full capacity and were not

restricted to the average pace of the group in a formal class.

Generally, given the right endowment, encouragement and opportunity, the abler children in particular are anxious to learn and, contrary to the belief of some theorists, they are prepared to tackle jobs requiring considerable mental effort and perseverance. Such children, accustomed to work through their own volition, are often better prepared for formal study in Grammar Schools at an appropriate age than are those whose course has followed a more conventional routine.

The lack of a formal curriculum and time-table does not mean that the teacher is withdrawn from the class, for the success of this kind of procedure, as of any other, depends very largely upon the teacher. It is her responsibility to build up an environment which will in the first place arouse a desire to learn and then stimulate children to make further efforts. She must be able to widen the sphere of their interests at the right moment; to set standards of achievement and be able to evaluate the results of all work and experience. She must help towards training in organization and social living and at the same time be able to enter into children's interests at their own level.

This presupposes a teacher who is herself a sympathetic person of wide interests and intellectual attainments, but above all she must possess her own philosophy of life and her own interpretation of the principles upon which this particular way of life and work in schools is based. Without such understanding the teaching becomes confused and the energies of the children dissipated.

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#### EDITORIAL POSTSCRIPT

This number of *The New Era* has been prepared by the Education Committee of the English Section of the New Education Fellowship. It is hoped to continue the discussion in the July-August number with an article by Dr. M. Swainson on 'Psychological "Climates" and the New Education' and authoritative articles on the educational value of a variety of teaching methods in the basic skills and some indication of the kind of child who tends to find help from each.

This will be followed later by numbers on educational standards in the secondary schools and by a series of articles on such topics as aesthetic and moral standards and on education for clear thinking and right judgment.



# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## THE GOOD INFANT SCHOOL—II

E. R. Boyce

AT the end of my last article,<sup>1</sup> I suggested that one of the ways in which a good infant school can be recognized is by the effectiveness of the education it provides. This does not, in my opinion, mean by the skilfulness that the children achieve in the three R's. The staff works towards no less a goal than the fullest possible development of each child. In the course of growing up and adapting to the reality of school life, it is expected that children will achieve the skills of which they are capable. Learning to read, for instance, comes about naturally as the result of becoming more mature and of certain experiences. What does this mean in practice?

We know that development (or growing up) is the result of the interplay between unseen forces and mechanisms within the personality and experiences outside it. Every child in a class has his own quota of intelligence which experience can draw out or deaden, but which we are now fairly certain that no education can augment. He has his own temperament which can be modified, but not radically altered, by experience. He has also his individuality which includes his own pattern of growth—slow in one direction, quicker in another, wavering sometimes, and so on. This individuality also includes his fund of instinctual power, often called 'drive' or 'aggression'. This is the power that makes him a leader and a creator, an inventor and discoverer, and provides him with the will to learn and to conform to the demands of the world of grown-ups.

Each child, through countless varieties of experience, meets the impact of the world outside himself. The interplay between these impacts and himself results in his growing up with or without mental and physical health, with or without emotional easiness, balance and confidence.

### Learning by School Experience

The staff of a good school realize their responsibility in offering each child the kind of experience that will best help his growth. They know that

the infant school period is important because of the profound inner changes that take place after the fifth year. Whilst they are aware that inner growth will take its own time and pattern and that they are powerless to shape individual personality, yet they recognize their responsibility to support and ease the course of the children's surge forward towards maturity by providing rich, deeply satisfying, educative experience.

The wisdom of the precept 'learn by experience' has become almost meaningless to many teachers because it has been overworked. Let us attempt some clarification. All schools offer children experience of many kinds, with all sorts of results. The most important results are the attitudes to life which may persist into adulthood. In some schools, children gain a lasting impression, created by school experience, that learning means sitting still and doing what you are told. Later, this becomes an inability or disinclination to find out or to think for themselves. Still later, we recognize the attitude in adults who have no opinions of their own, readily accepting any that are offered persistently and dramatically enough through newspapers, propaganda and films. The experience of being rewarded for several years by stars on the wall-chart for effort and success cannot fail to leave some children with the uncorrected attitude that one works for tangible reward and that one does not work without it. Another type of experience convinces them that the less they say, the more grown-ups like them. And so on. We might generalize by saying that this kind of experience is inhibiting and conducive to a negative attitude towards life.

The good infant school provides educative experience which results in the opposite kind of attitude. Because our aim is full development and the satisfaction of basic needs, we challenge the inborn curiosity of children so that their interest flows outward, away from themselves and personal reward, to the world without. We deliberately encourage achievement and self-approval by encouraging them to experiment and find out for themselves and to ask questions. We

<sup>1</sup> See *The New Era*, March 1953, Miss Boyce's third article, "Playing their Way to the three R's" will appear in September-October.



organize the school so that they can try out their powers, can organize themselves in a children's world which they can handle. We expect them to fail often and to try again—and to achieve even oftener. We also know that they will meet the need to know how to read, write and calculate as they explore, through school life, the mysteries and intricacies of the grown-up world.

The staff of a good infant school is aware that the effectiveness of the experience offered to children can be tested only by the behaviour of the children themselves. They enable themselves to assess this behaviour by reminding themselves of the following facts:

Children begin life with an insatiable curiosity. The work has been good if they are still seekers after information, enthusiastic learners, persistent questioners at the age of 7 plus.

They begin life with powers of intense observation. The education we provide is effective if they are still alert and watchful; still ready to stand and stare, but also to come to conclusions, to reason and generalize.

They were fascinated by words at four and five. Are they still curious about new names and expressions, finding satisfaction in using more precise language and asking meanings by the time they leave us? Has this inborn interest been stimulated and refined so that they enjoy poetry and play-making?

As babies, they responded to sound, rhythm and tone. Has this interest been fostered by the sort of experience that leads to eager response to song and music?

They were always attracted by animals. Has school life aroused sympathy with and some understanding of their lives so that ignorant cruelty is unthinkable?

They were always inventors, creators and experimenters. Are they still?

They understood something about shape, pattern, measurement and order when they came to school. Do they understand more fully at the age of seven? Good Junior school teachers also ask themselves these questions.

And what attitudes to life have they acquired? We may summarize a few. For instance, 'If you don't know, you can find out.' 'It is more fun to be friends with people and help them.' 'A job done gives you immense pleasure.'

These are roughly the sort of results by which we can assess the effectiveness of the education.

## How is Effective Education Achieved?

Let us refer back to the vitality of the good infant school. Liveliness in school depends on the presence of a great variety of material so that children can invent and exploit many situations. We must furnish our school for the use of children. So we will keep in mind *equipment*. Next, let us remind ourselves of that special quality which is the result of satisfying the children's needs—freedom to talk, to make friends, to use their physical powers naturally, and so on. There must be things to talk about and to share and to do together. Again, the emphasis is on equipment *in space*. Needs cannot be satisfied from a position in a desk in a classroom. Lastly, effectiveness of the education, implying the developing of each personality, means nourishment of native interests, the acquisition of fresh interests and the growth of wholesome, outward-going attitudes to life. This involves things and space but also opportunities for teachers to use their craft, to give of the depth of their knowledge and wisdom, to allow their own gifts and personalities to be explored and used by the children as nourishment and as support in the struggle for self-realization and adjustment. The good infant school works within the same scaffolding as any other—that is through organization, curriculum, and teacher-attitudes. But each of these is based on the needs of growing children.

## Organization and Head Teachers' Rôle

The organization of a good infant school can be none other than that of a democratic community of people, living together, sharing equal rights, enjoying equal consideration, living in mutual respect, but understanding and keeping the laws. The children as well as the teachers have the freedom of the building, and they have no doubts that it is *their* place, arranged for them, and that they are always welcome there.

But in this community there must be leadership and guidance. The leadership of the whole school is vested in the Head Teacher, and she is the co-ordinating influence, the particular friend of everyone, which means children and each member of the staff, the caretaker, the kitchen staff, and the parents. The children look on her rather as the universal provider and general manager, at the service of all. There may be six home-rooms but the Head Teacher makes a home of the whole school building. 'My class' and 'my



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teacher' are highly important to infant school children but there is still 'our school', created by the Headmistress.

She is also the one who is responsible for safeguarding each individuality. It is her job to select the best social setting for them all. As a rule, it is true that stability and continuity in teacher-child relations is highly desirable. A child needs to retain one teacher for at least a year, and if possible for two years; that is to say, through his whole period in the infant school. Similarly, each group needs to maintain its identity throughout the 5 to 7+ period. There are bound to be changes owing to removals, but the practice of shifting children in and out of classes every few months is destructive at this age. But there can be no hard and fast rules; individual children must be considered and no organization must be rigid. Some children and teachers are incompatible. For the good of both, changes must be made. Some children suffer from developmental troubles, slow growth in certain directions, ill health. These and a few others too perhaps are not at ease in a class. The best plan is to keep such children with the group in which

each can work and play to the best advantage, where each feels he is with friends. Achievement in the three R's is not the good school's way of assessing school organization. The question is not 'Has he the requirements to fit the class?' but 'Is this the best class for him?'

The Head Teacher is also the steadying and developing influence. A good school changes and develops with the increasing experience of the staff and parents. But the Head uses a democratic plan for introducing change. There must be staff conferences for discussion and in order to clarify aims and each one must have the opportunity to make her unique contribution. There is no need to limit creative teachers. It is not wise to force teachers to work against their own life-pattern. All members of a staff need to know the common aims of the school life, but they can understand them only in terms of themselves and they can translate them into practice only as far as they understand. Moreover, they all want security if they are to do their best for the children. The good Head Teacher gives support where it is needed in the form which is best understood, e.g. through suggestion, through



a more closely woven programme, even through a simple outline of work to be done. Relaxation is the best medicine for all teacher-anxiety and this is always found in a good infant school.

### The Class-Teacher's Rôle

In the classroom, the teachers guide their children as the Head guides her staff. Acceptance and understanding are the two most important watchwords, and both are a direct outcome of democratic organization. The children are accepted as they are, and because she understands them, their teacher is able to guide them towards what they are capable of becoming. She is also the co-ordinator of common interests, she fosters their interest in each other. While she is safeguarding the precious individuality of each, she is encouraging them in the feeling of 'togetherness', of becoming members one of another. She shares goals and enters into their interests; guiding, widening, clarifying as she does so. But she has everything well under control and she lets the children feel her safeguarding strength. She leaves no doubt about what is allowed and what is not allowed. In fact, she is the strongest and wisest member of the home classroom but she is still only the leader.

*Note.*—The discussion which followed this lecture was most interesting. One teacher asked 'Should there be no restraint?' All members agreed that the answer is 'Yes, decidedly'. We discussed the restraint imposed by simple laws made for the easy running of the class and for the children's own convenience; the restraints imposed naturally by the limitations of space and sharing of tools and materials; the restraint imposed by the wishes of members of small groups working together with the agreement of other members who wished to be accepted as good companions; the restraint of leadership (already mentioned); restraint by example. This means through identification with the beloved teacher. Children want to be like her and imitate her courtesy, consideration and control by voluntarily controlling their own behaviour. Children slip easily and naturally into the habit of acceptable behaviour in a classroom where consideration is expected. But, of course, there are bound to be problems, outbursts, aggression, because the children are still learning how to live and how to manage themselves. Maturation is doing its manage themselves.

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# ENTRY TO SCHOOL<sup>1</sup>—

## A CHILD THERAPIST CONTINUES

*Erna Popper, B.A., Instructor of Child Therapy, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio*

WHEN teaching a group of five-year-old children during their first few days at school, I sometimes had the feeling of participating in a psychological experiment in which a large number of subjects is placed in an objectively identical situation. Their individual responses to it can be evaluated by comparison with an accepted norm. Like most teachers, I soon learned to make some predictions about my new charges' likely adjustment by observing their varied initial behaviour and, consciously or unconsciously, adapted my handling accordingly. Two particular kinds of reaction presented me with so great a problem of management that I could not help focussing my attention on them. One of these is the clinging child who often screams or kicks when his mother attempts to go away from him; the other is the passive child who does not protest openly, but whose stiff expression and manner at once convey 'I won't have anything to do with school.' As I became better acquainted with the group as a whole, I found that quite a few other youngsters showed similar difficulties to a lesser degree. Their initial manifestations usually disappeared quite quickly but they nevertheless took some time to settle down and sometimes their difficulties flared up again at a later stage.

These two kinds of children are frequently referred to a child guidance clinic. In treating such cases I have been able to understand better the various factors underlying these disturbances. I am now trying in retrospect to assess how much of my new insight I could have applied in helping such children as a teacher. The following short excerpts from the treatment records of two typical examples may be of value in considering this question from an educational point of view. Both these patients had subsidiary symptoms which I shall exclude where they do not directly relate to their difficulties at school.

*Derek B.* was a tall and handsome five-year-old boy of superior intelligence. He had attended school only four weeks when his mother sought

psychiatric advice for him because of the following problem: from the first day of school, Derek had adopted a completely negative attitude. He would not talk to the teacher or to the children; he refused to do anything that might be expected of him, such as participating in games, dressing and undressing. Neither coaxing nor firmness would induce him to abandon his chair on which he sat rigidly. It was only under great pressure that he followed the other children into the playground where he again stood silently in a corner. He so much lacked spontaneity that his arms appeared quite stiff when the teacher helped him put on his coat. Nothing of what happened seemed to be taken in by him. This behaviour was in sharp contrast to his attitude at home: there he had always been a lively child, intensely interested in everything. He maintained a warm and happy relationship with both his parents. He had a younger brother with whom he did not get on too well but there was no evidence of serious sibling rivalry.

Derek never mentioned directly what he had done at school but he treated his parents to recitals of songs and dances which he had learned there by merely watching. He had never expressed any dislike of school and it came as a great shock to the parents when they received the teacher's first note about Derek's school problem. In their despair and panic the parents scolded him severely for his bad behaviour and punished him. The difficulty, however, persisted. Mrs. B. nearly cried when she related the story at the clinic, feeling that she had completely failed in the upbringing of her child. In spite of Derek's obvious reactions, his mother had great difficulty in facing the fact that her boy disliked school. This was particularly hard for her because she herself had had a real problem during her schooling and had remained shy and diffident in all her social contacts. She had always dreaded that she might transmit these symptoms to her children and hence regarded the boy's adjustment at school as a test of her capacity as a good mother. It almost seemed as though the boy wished to spare his mother this disappointment and therefore he had never been able to discuss his feelings

<sup>1</sup> We have published two previous articles under this title, one by Mr. A. Leslie Hutchinson, County Education Officer for the Isle of Wight, September-October, 1951, and one from a teacher's point of view by Miss M. R. Killon in January, 1952.—Ed.



with her. Already during the summer preceding his first term he had considerably withheld his doubts when his mother had read to him a book in which school was portrayed as a place of happy activities.

I could convince Derek's mother that we should be in a better position to understand his troubles if we enabled him to talk about them. To encourage this, Mrs. B. told Derek a story about a little boy who did not like school at all but was afraid to tell his mummy lest she got cross with him. One day, he began to tell his mummy about all the things that worried him at school and she helped him to feel much better about them. Derek made no response to this, but the next day he watched a dancing lesson for young children on TV and pointed out a little boy who refused to join in, saying: 'This is a bad boy; he won't do as he is told. What will his mummy do?' Mrs. B. reassured Derek that the boy was not really bad; he just did not like the lesson and his mummy loved him all the same. Thus Derek began to talk at home about all his complaints about the teacher and the children. It also turned out that he was angry with his mummy for expecting so much of him when his little brother was allowed to do just as he pleased.

On looking back over Derek's pre-school behaviour, the mother now realized that he had shown a tendency to react passively when facing some difficult situations. She had overlooked this because to a slight degree it fitted in well with the family attitude and it was only when Derek had to go to school that this trend became so exaggerated. Mrs. B. gained insight into the interaction of her own difficulties and those of the child. She was not only able to change her handling but to discuss openly the reasons for Derek's behaviour with him. He soon went through a phase during which he gloried in telling friends and strangers how much he hated school. At the same time, however, he began to be much more active in his form and for the first time he brought home pictures he had made. This gave the mother a chance to praise him and to show him the positive side of being a big schoolboy. After a month Derek insisted on walking to school alone and his new boisterous independence spread from school to home. He played more readily with the children in the neighbourhood and helped his mother with errands. At that time he told people 'I might like school after Christ-

mas but I don't have to like it yet.' By the end of that term Derek's difficulties had subsided. Although he occasionally grumbles at home about minor incidents in his school life, he has now been a happy schoolboy for a whole year.

Two features are outstanding in this case: (a) the mother's attitude to her child's entry to school, and (b) the boy's ready response to treatment by the mother.

Certainly Mrs. B.'s personal experiences, her lack of self-confidence and her attitude to authority strongly affected her anxiety about Derek's response to school. For this reason she had been unable to prepare the child for the fact that he might not like everything at school and had made it impossible for him to tell her about it when the difficulty arose. Yet I feel that this mother is unusual only in the degree to which she displayed her attitudes, since most mothers worry to some extent about what the teacher will think of them should their child not quite come up to expectations. It is also quite common that mothers, who regard complaints as indications of maladjustment, unknowingly create an atmosphere which prevents their child from criticizing the school. It would be very reassuring to all mothers to be told by the teacher in a preliminary interview or during the first days of attendance that we expect the children to come to school regularly but do not expect them to like everything—just as we adults do not expect to like all aspects of a new job. In fact it is very difficult to entertain only nice feelings about school even in the long run, but one can make compromises much more easily if one has a chance to grumble about unpleasant experiences. Also, the negative impressions of school often outweigh the positive ones at the outset, in spite of the fact that both parents and teachers do their best to mitigate the difficulties. We might go further and convey to our pupils, both by our attitude and by our words, that we realize it will take some time before they can really like us or the school, that there must be many new things which puzzle them or make them feel unhappy, and that we should like them to tell us about such worries so that we can help them. Sometimes one can then clear up difficulties with a child and gain his co-operation by explaining the circumstances. Sometimes he still will not agree with us and we must be content to say: 'I am very sorry you feel so badly. You need not like doing



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this but I am afraid you still have to do it'—thus imposing a command and yet respecting the child's feelings about it.

Derek's ready response to the mother's changed attitude was due to the fact that his symptom of passive resistance was treated in its early stages, before it had had time to develop into an ingrained character trait. At this point he still responded much more actively in other unpleasant situations. In many cases this symptom is neglected because it does not present an immediate problem of management or it is hoped that the child will outgrow his passivity. Actually, in treating children of this kind one finds that this difficulty belongs to the ones least accessible by psychotherapy if it has persisted for a number of years. Because mothers are often unaware of the extent of the child's problem, it is very helpful when the teacher can recommend a child guidance clinic if a child does not respond readily to a change of handling.

Jane S. was thirteen years old when she was referred to our clinic because of a persistent school

phobia which had made it impossible for her to attend school during the past six months. More recently she had even refused to leave the house, went out only rarely and then in the company of her mother. The history of her disturbance was revealed in detail during the two years of treatment which incidentally brought about only an alleviation of her severe symptoms. Jane was the only child of middle-class parents. She was a pretty girl, of lower average intelligence, and well developed physically. She had always clung to her mother, who maintained an extremely close protective relationship with her. In her earliest years there was some evidence of Jane's unwillingness to leave her mother but it was only when she entered school that the problem of separation came fully to the fore. On the very first day, and for weeks after that, Jane would fly into a severe temper tantrum the moment the mother attempted to leave her with the teacher. She struggled with her mother to the extent of tearing her clothes, but after the teacher took her over and prevented her from following the mother, she would calm down fairly soon. She would cry for a while but then participated well in the



activities. For a time Mrs. S. tried to trick Jane by first promising to stay with her, then surreptitiously leaving her after she had settled down to play. This intensified the child's anxiety and she began to resist leaving home in the mornings. The parents tried persuasion, scolding and spanking. After some time Jane seemed to accept the inevitable situation. Shortly before the beginning of the term an aunt had had a baby and Jane had repeatedly told her teacher that her mummy would also have a baby, which was not true. Within the next two years Mrs. S. had two miscarriages which meant two spells in hospital. This revived Jane's difficulty. Only this time she complained a great deal about the teacher, giving this as a reason for her reluctance to leave for school. That problem was temporarily solved by transferring her to a different school. In the course of the next few years she changed schools twice more, but in spite of that her fear of school became worse. Rows occurred every morning and there were intermittent periods of two or three days when Jane could not attend at all. When at school she was often overwhelmed by anxiety which made it increasingly impossible for her to profit from the lessons. Frequently she had to be sent home, until finally she refused to attend altogether. By then the nature of the symptom had changed from a separation anxiety to a fully fledged school phobia and Jane quoted different teachers, children and lessons as the objects of her fears.

It became clear that from the beginning Jane's main conflict lay in her disturbed relationship with her mother. Except in her outbursts of temper she had never been able to express any hostile feelings towards her mother, fearing that mother might abandon her if she knew of her child's anger—or get herself another baby to replace the naughty Jane. Unfortunately Jane came for treatment after her long-standing symptom had become endowed with many subsequent meanings and had spread into so many aspects of her everyday life that she had to withdraw from all activities in order to cope with the ever-increasing fears. Children with such a long standing and severe school phobia can be helped only by daily psychoanalytical treatment over a number of years. These facilities are rarely available, and the weekly or bi-weekly clinical treatment fails to bring about sufficient changes in the character of the patients to enable them to

develop normally without the risk of a relapse or the emergence of new symptoms. On the other hand, it has been our experience that a cure can be effected by short term treatment at a child guidance clinic if these children are referred soon after the onset of their difficulty, i.e. often at the time of entering school.

The description of Jane's behaviour at the age of five years reminded me of a number of children with similar symptoms, though less intense. In contrast to Derek, who really disliked school, children of Jane's type usually enjoy school activities once they are separated from the mother. This accounts for the sense of irritation with which a teacher witnesses these scenes, for one feels justified in believing that the child is just very naughty and the mother inadequate in handling the situation. Such children can respond well to the objective attitude of the teacher because their conflict still lies only with the mother. There is no cause for the child to become angry with the teacher towards whom she feels quite neutral at the start. We could see, however, in Jane's case, that in the course of years the conflict spread from the mother to the teachers and she had to protect herself against outbursts of hostility at school by withdrawing from it. Mothers who anticipate a separation problem are so anxious to avoid a scene which they feel would lay them open to criticism that they tend to leave their child more hastily than is expected of them. They can sometimes be reassured when the teacher explains to them that many children have difficulty in leaving their mothers at first and that they are quite welcome to stay on for a while. In mild cases of this kind it sometimes helps to show the child: 'I know you must be very angry with mummy for leaving you at school, but she still loves you and thinks of you at home and she will certainly come to fetch you.' Although a forced or tricked separation may temporarily relieve the practical problems—as it did with Jane—it is almost sure ultimately to enhance the child's fear of being left alone. There are of course children who adjust themselves well after an initial phase of separation difficulty and never develop a school phobia. They are usually the lucky ones whose family life never presents them with *unexpected* events (removals, hospitalizations, birth of a sibling, death, illness, etc.) which, unprepared for, may so easily upset their precarious balance.



# IT'S NICE TO BE ILL

*L. Ruddock, Lecturer in Social Psychology, University of Manchester*

**W**HEN I had the mesullse my antie Bettye brought me a picture book. I was 7 year old when I had this Illness. I had a lot of presents. I had appls and Oranges. And allso my antie nelly pears and peeche's. I had lotes of present's. I went to Bury infermery. I felt happy and glad. and when I had the flue I was in the infermery. one week my dad came for me to 2-0 clock. We had good teas thier I had all the mells good I had a lot of children to play with. And I did a lot off Drawing then and I had a painting box I liked writing this story very much.'

A group of 90 Lancashire school children were asked to write on the theme 'When I was ill'. The above is the contribution of an 8-year-old girl. It seems that the times of her illnesses remain a golden memory in her mind. In this she was not exceptional. Despite their sharp memories of pain and discomfort, the cheerfulness of these children's thought of illness is quite impressive. In fact, of their comments containing some kind of pleasant feeling or the reverse, the pleasant ones outnumbered the others by more than two to one. To discover the reason for this pleasure, let us examine what the children say. I quote the happy comments from the top sheets in the pile before me, as they come to hand:

'I got two comics and a little playway book . . . I had plenty of everything I particular wanted (to eat).'

'Mrs. J. gave me some butterscotch.'

'My antty brought me some fruit.'

'Daddy plade a game . . . Mummy came and we played tiddly-winks and snakes and ladders.'

'My grandma came with some decorations and a book.'

'I had a big pink birthday cake.'

'The doctor gave me a shilling.'

'I had a wireless by my bed, and a fire as well.'

'the Nurses wer nice. I had ice cream and soup and jelly.'

'I had coffee, poached egg and cake.'

'Daddy bought me some comics, and mummy bought me some chocs and a jig-saw puzzle.'

Clearly, the children remember that people made a fuss of them. The fruit, comics, games, ice-cream and nice foods all mean that they were taken notice of, their wishes consulted, even

pandered to. This, of course, is a dramatic contrast in the situation of a young child who is much more used to being required to behave himself, to make himself clean and quiet, learn things, and to understand that his desires are inappropriate, improper, too expensive, that he is on the whole rather a nuisance to his over-worked mother, and that his wishes, if not his needs, come after the adults'. These children were very used to comics and ice-creams. What really impressed them was that 'mummy was very kind', 'my mother was good to me', and 'When my dad came home he came upstairs and said, "What would you like for dinner" I said "What is there" he said "there are some pies and chips" I said "I will have a pie and some chips"'. 'When I had Yellow Jaundice the doctor sed I had to have stemed fihs and chocklot and boled egg and poached Egg and red medecin . . .'—the discomfort of the illness was not worth a mention, apparently.

Such consideration, such importance, must seem like a dream come true. We cannot suppose that the pleasure of eating steamed fish really outweighs the disagreeableness of jaundice. It is the fact that the fish so specially served for the child that makes the experience so unforgettable. This, it appears, is *quite* sufficient to outweigh the pain of common illness. This point will easily be recognized by those who have discovered for themselves the limitation of physical punishment as a discouragement to activities desired for emotional reasons.

Children (and adults incidentally) are much more deeply concerned about comfortable feelings than a comfortable body. Anxiety is much more distressing to them than physical pain. The reassurance of love, safety, care and consideration that they experience from their parents when they are ill may be for some children the most profoundly comforting episode in their lives. The memory of it may be so strong that in times of stress and uncertainty, such as may happen when changing schools or when a baby brother is born, he will feel a deep need to experience again this reassurance of paternal care, and will allow himself to become ill in order to do so. How this can happen is not clear in detail, but there is nothing more certain than the capacity of children (and



many adults) to run a temperature or catch the current infection when they are feeling particularly in need of support. For some reason, most people find it much easier to understand that illness can also be used as a weapon, a means of exploitation. 'My mother said are you happy and I said yes because you bring me sweets and cocolates, and my mother said you little twister.'

It is, I think, clear that there is danger in parents making too sudden a switch of attitude from discipline to over-indulgence when the child falls ill. Perhaps they tend to do so because they know at the back of their minds that in many ways they have not been able to show all the patience and understanding that their children need, and that the child has often suffered in the daily struggle of family life. In simple fact, it is almost impossible to meet a child's full demands, and many parents feel needlessly guilty because they have failed to accomplish the impossible. It is feelings of this kind that are strongly aroused when the child is ill. It is as if the parent undergoes a conversion, and resolves to make up for past shortcomings, to give everything, to withhold nothing. It is no wonder that the child is sometimes overwhelmed.

The parents' helplessness is also a factor. They wish very much to do something to cure the illness, but they can do nothing but follow the doctor's brief instructions and wait for the course of nature. This urge to do something for the sick child, the wish to relieve the painfulness of merely

having to wait by taking action about the situation, may find expression in buying presents and in waiting over-anxiously upon the child's whims.

The parent's temptation to behave in this way is strengthened by the fact that sickness is a kind of defeat for all the child's naughtiness, noisiness and wayward impulse. At last the child is quiet, helpless and out of mischief. The clash of wills is ended. Sometimes indeed the child's illness may appear as a relief to an exhausted mother, and she may find a new source of energy on being freed from this struggle. She has her baby back again, who was once powerless in her arms. She may be so gratified inwardly by this, that (assuming there is no great anxiety over the illness) she finds it easy to be sweet and kind and cheerful to her darling, whose wilfulness and destructiveness she found so hard to bear the week before. How, therefore, can she resist rewarding him for being ill?

Sick children certainly need every care, increased love and attention, games to occupy them, sometimes tempting food to encourage eating, always reassurance and consideration. What they often get is a rather emotional fuss and a shower of unexpected presents, which gives an inappropriate stimulation. But if parents will consider how their own feelings might lead them into this kind of impulsive switch-over here illustrated, they may find it possible to anticipate and to maintain a level and consistent handling of the situation.

## PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

*Dr. Harold Wyndham, Director-General of Education in New South Wales*

**M**Y contribution to this discussion will be confined to some observations on parent-teacher relations, especially as they appear from the point of view of school administration. We hear much talk to-day about parent-teacher relations. It seems to be taken for granted by some that effective teacher relations come into being spontaneously and inevitably. At the outset, I should like to remind you that this is not the case; effective teacher relations must be built up deliberately and with understanding by both parties. Such relations are not easily achieved and, indeed, it must be confessed, that in some centres the desirability of establishing such relations does not seem to have been adequately recognized. Lest we become too impatient with

such a situation, let us remind ourselves, furthermore, that the desirability of parents and teachers co-operating in a common task as co-partners, is a relatively modern idea.

If you cast your mind back over your own experience, you will recall the many parents who make no effort to discuss their children with school authorities and you may also have known teachers who have seemed rather too busy to take part in such discussions. You will have encountered the parent whose attitude is that he has handed over his child to the school, thereby having discharged the whole of his educational responsibility. There are teachers, too, who, because they are expert in their field, do not seem to think that parents have any contribution to



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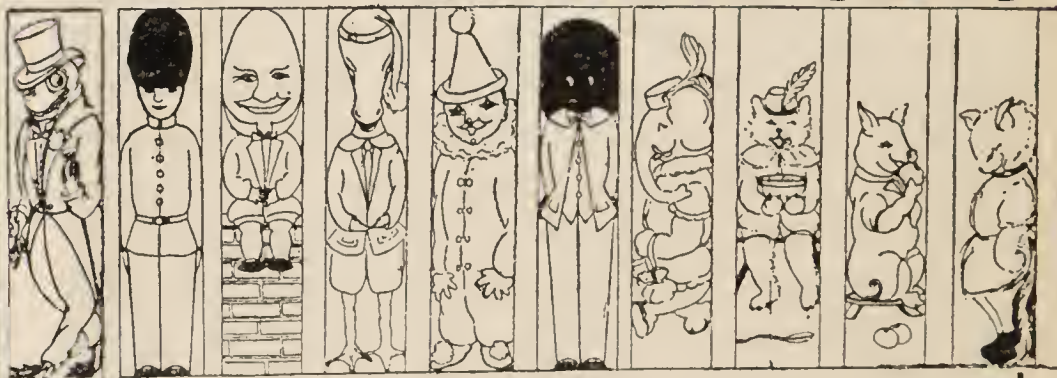
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make to their understanding of their pupils. Both make the mistake of thinking that the appropriate educational authority can compass the whole task of understanding children. So I suggest that before we talk too glibly about 'parent-teacher co-operation' we should remind ourselves that the necessary attitude of mind in both parties is not easy to achieve. Such an attitude does not just happen; there are difficulties and obstacles—many of them quite legitimate—on both sides.

Let me therefore make four sets of suggestions. In the first place, since the welfare and progress of the child concerned must always be the prime target, it seems obvious that both parent and teacher should know as much as possible about the child. It is obvious, for example, that teachers who see Johnny at school, see Johnny as part of the school pattern, and Johnny at school, as some of us know to our cost, is a different person from Johnny at home. It is quite possible for the boy who is regarded as a nuisance at school to be an apparently guileless, docile, individual at home. Some exchange of information between parent and teacher is manifestly necessary.

In my experience, this exchange takes place most commonly and most naturally at the infants' school level. There is an intimacy which develops between parents and teachers of children under eight, thanks to the work of Mothers' Clubs and the existence of other bridges between home and school, which makes understanding between parent and teacher in the infants' school more general and more reliable than later on.

There is a tendency for this more intimate relationship to break down as the child moves from the infants' to the primary school. There are many reasons for this. For example, John's mother no longer visits the school in order to take him home; he is a big boy now. In any case, it is likely that John has a younger brother or sister who lays great claim on the daily attention of his mother. In any case, primary school appears to be a more serious business than life in the infants' school; many teachers and many parents tend to feel that the problems which now arise are problems best dealt with by teachers. The growing and proper emphasis upon attainments leads both parents and teachers, at times, to overlook the fact that problems of adjustment still remain, and are of paramount importance.

The result is, in some schools, that the only visits from parents which teachers receive are

those from irate parents or from parents who are unduly solicitous over the welfare of their children.

It seems clear that ways and means should be developed which would enable parent and teacher to meet before the parent becomes irate and early enough to prevent parents from becoming too ill-informed about the abilities and problems of their offspring. It is probable that there will always be parents who will think that their geese are swans, but it is also probable that some teachers could be helped to detect the finer plumage if they were helped by information which parents could supply and by a better knowledge of the child's home background.

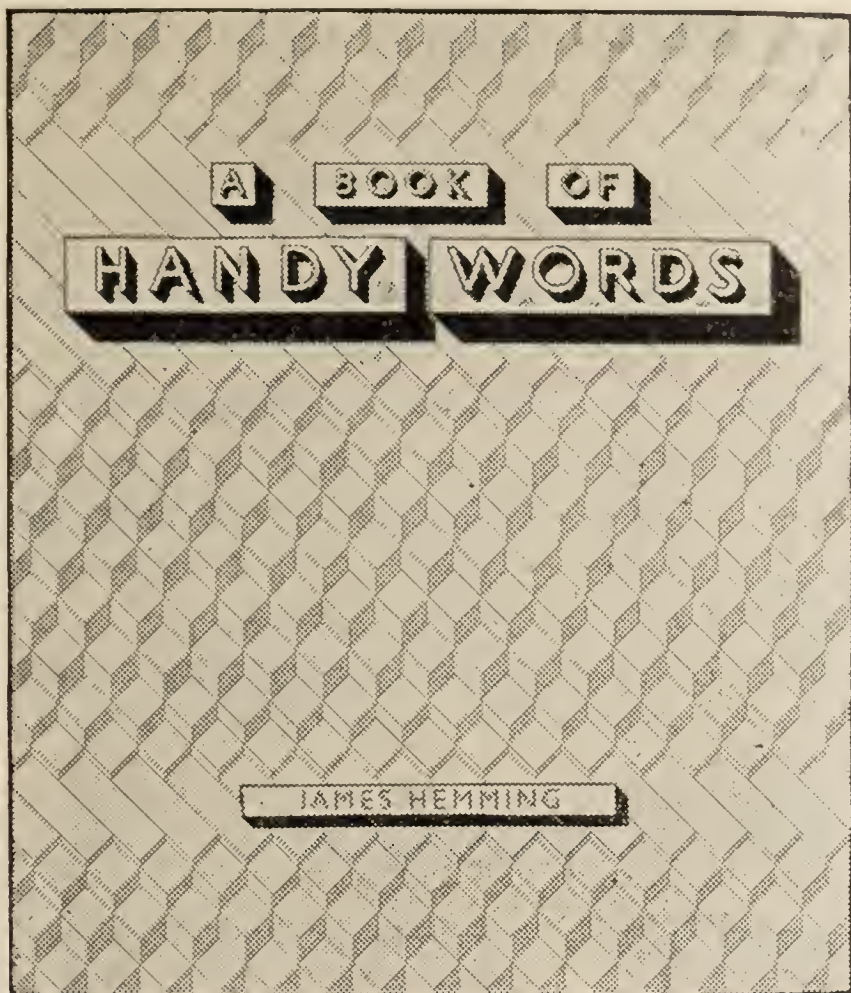
I am convinced that many parents, being conscientious and intelligent, are seriously concerned over what happens to their children at school. But they have not developed the habit—perhaps they have not been helped to develop the habit—of discussing their anxieties and hopes with the teachers concerned. How many parents have you heard discussing their children, how they are getting on at school and the problems they are encountering, but discussing them at the tennis club, in the golf house, between hands at Canasta—anywhere except in the place where it will do the most good. That is, in the Headmaster's or the Headmistress's office.

To take some questions which exercise the minds of parents sooner or later: 'How are children selected for high school?' 'Why should a boy learn Latin?' 'What is a junior technical course?'—Will that course enable him to go to the University?' 'What is this I.Q. business, anyway?'

In many schools excellent work has been done in providing parents with answers to these and many other questions. I have seen, for example, in certain primary schools, very sound relationship built up between parents and staff and between parents and the education system as a whole, by calling together the parents of sixth class pupils at least half-way through the year and allowing them to meet not only the Principal of the school but the District Inspector and the School Counsellor. From them they have learnt the whole story of selection for secondary school and of the range of courses which lie beyond sixth grade. The matter has been open for full questioning and discussion well before the point of transfer and selection.



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**LONGMANS**

This brings me to the second set of suggestions I should like to make. It is important that parents should be told and should be encouraged to find out, what the school is attempting to do for their children. I have already mentioned some of the questions which arise in connection with the transfer of children from primary to secondary school; other groups of questions obviously suggest themselves. Why is homework set in schools? How much is expected of children in various grades? What part can the home play in making such assignments for independent work effective? The new Curriculum for Primary Schools and the Alternative Secondary Curriculum which will appear in schools in 1953, provide golden opportunities for principals of schools to establish a bridge between home and school. Parents will co-operate more effectively if they know the objectives of teaching in the school. There will be much less puzzled discussion among parents themselves if they are helped to understand why the new curriculum has eliminated certain types of work and why the order of treatment has been varied. How often, for

example, is the statement made that there is a serious falling off in standards in the three R's in our schools? Many parents have had no opportunity of knowing that in certain of these fundamental skills, attainments in schools are better than they were twenty years ago. Few people know of the emphasis which the modern curriculum places upon maturation—upon the determination of the optimum stage at which children should be asked to undertake certain tasks. If parents knew more about such considerations, there would be less family pride in the fact that one member of the family had succeeded in passing on to secondary work at an unduly early age. Teachers know that such an achievement is not so much a matter for pride as for anxiety.

Here again I have attended an initiation session for parents of incoming secondary school boys. The Headmaster concerned conducted a very good session, speaking with commonsense and with wisdom. He invited discussion and questions from parents and he left them in little doubt as to the objectives he had in mind for his pupils. The



parents went away feeling that they had not only been taken into his confidence, but that they could play their part as parents more effectively because with greater insight.

The third avenue of parent-teacher co-operation is in the field of child study. It is clear that what I am suggesting is the development of one phase of parent education. How many parents worry about the behaviour of their boy or girl simply because they do not know enough about behaviour of boys or girls at the age of their own child. They learn something by comparing notes with other parents; they could learn much more and perhaps more accurately, if they could be brought together with other parents and helped to understand something more of boys or girls in general.

In one school I know the services of the School Counsellor are being used very skilfully in this regard. I know something of the outcome of a talk given by such a school counsellor to a group of parents upon problems of adolescence. I know of one mother, worried and exasperated over the moods and behaviour of her gangling teen-age son, telling her neighbour, after such a parent education meeting, that she was overjoyed to have discovered that her Tom was 'normal'!

Finally, let me suggest that it is through the development of parent-teacher relations that the school can best achieve the position which many writers have stressed in recent years, of becoming a real community centre. I have seen schools which have become a focus for the cultural activities of their community. Various groups meet in the school in the evening—a film group, a drama group, a choral group or perhaps a broadcast discussion group. Too often such groups are the outcome of the enthusiasm of one person or of a very few. They have their heyday and then tend to fade away. To develop as a community centre, a school needs a more continuing interest. Obviously the most abiding interest upon which the school can call is the parents' interest in the welfare and progress of their children. Indeed, I am inclined to think that it is through the careful development of an association between the parents and the school, out of school hours, that the most effective bridge between home and school can be built. If the parents of a community could be encouraged to form the habit of meeting at the school to discuss among themselves, under the guidance of the principal and others connected with the school,

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problems of common interest, much would be achieved. Individual visits of parents to the school in school hours would still be necessary and should not be discouraged, but the necessity for them would be less frequent. For one of the practical considerations which many enthusiasts overlook, is that if all parents, or even a considerable proportion of them, were to visit schools when they were worried about their children, the teachers would have little opportunity to teach!

Time does not allow me to develop this suggestion in detail, but I cannot but feel that such a programme of parent-teacher education would not only have the effect of providing a systematic background for dealing with problems of individual parents, but the even greater benefit of providing a positive rather than a negative approach to the whole problem of parent-teacher relations.

[Because of its interest to Parent-Teacher Associations in other countries, this article is reproduced, by kind permission, from *New Horizons* (the magazine of the New Education Fellowship in Australia), Summer Issue, 1953.]



# Book Reviews

## Pathfinder Introductory Books A, B and C. John and Peggy Bradley. (Oliver and Boyd. Books A and B, 1/3 each. Book C, 1/6).

The purpose of these three books is to stimulate an interest in reading and to give practice in the use of a limited and controlled vocabulary to those children who have failed in their first attempts to learn to read. The subject matter—the work of a sailor, a fireman and an airman—is well chosen for such boys, and the encouragement given to write, draw and make should prove a helpful method of increasing interest as well as ensuring the mastery of a few words. The repetition of words and the revision through exercises in finding the right word or sentence for pictures is also useful.

The books are clearly illustrated and on the whole the print is well arranged to encourage good left to right eye movements and the recognition of shapes, but the arrangement of some pages is distracting, with illustrations, all in red, going across, in between and beside the print.

Teachers who use the Pathfinder books will probably find these a useful introduction to them for some of their children.

M. Metcalfe Smith

## The Robin. Hulton Press, 4d. every Monday.

The first few issues of *The Robin* (the new magazine for small children published weekly by the Hulton Press) represent a successful attempt to put on the market a 'comic' which is suitable in content, attractive in appearance, amusing and educationally sound. The front page story, dealing with the adventures of the television favourite, 'Andy Pandy', is delightfully presented in good colour with the characters well drawn and a total absence of the unnecessary and confusing detail which makes most 'comics' appear to the average child little more than a collection of postage stamps.

The 'Reading Strip' is a useful innovation in a magazine of this type and the first two strips promise well in content and method of presentation. It seems a sound and concrete way for parents to help their children to learn to read and, no doubt, many parents would welcome their collective publication as a reading book.

All the material which is specifically designed for children to read for themselves is printed in clear, bold, well-spaced type and is comparable with

many of the better reading books recently published.

'Things to Do' and 'Fun and Games' are, of necessity, limited and I think it is a pity more space is not allotted to them. The type of picture puzzle found in the second number is a good exercise in observation and the kind of thing that children like, but I thought the picture was much too small and the foxes much too difficult to find. The pictures for the 'Robin Scrapbook' provide material for compiling a picture dictionary, and the picture crossword a sound aid to spelling.

*The Robin* is a useful addition to the reading apparatus in the Infant School. Children love 'comics' and here is one which is totally lacking in sordidness, violence and 'slangy' speech and, in addition to fulfilling its function as a laughter-maker, is cultural and artistic. As an aid to learning to read, its best use is in the home where mother or father can spend time on the individual child, going through the stories and helping with games and puzzles.

If *The Robin* proves a successful experiment, as I am sure it will, I hope the publishers will be encouraged to produce a similar magazine for the seven-ten year old children for whom *The Robin* is too simple in content and its elder brother *Eagle* too difficult both in content and presentation.

Nancy Allmark

## Children's Toys throughout the Ages. Leslie Daiken. (Bats- ford, 25s.)

'A toy, simply, is something to have fun with.' What a charming and effective definition, which the author charmingly and effectively justifies, particularly since one feels that, in adding as part-title 'throughout the ages' he smilingly implied, with his tongue in his cheek, 'for all ages'!

Here are toys that move and toys that teach; here are musical toys of almost incredible complexity and toy theatres that were 'things of true colour and romance' and from which originated the catchphrase 'penny plain and twopence coloured'; and, of course, here are dolls and soldiers.

Dolls and soldiers! In my ignorance I had believed that dolls as toys had emerged from the womb of time. Now I know that they are not 'age-old archetypal playthings passing down with only superficial changes from pre-Christian civilizations', but that they began as 'objects of magico-religious significance'. I had believed that . . . but fully documented statements in the book have corrected much of my erroneous thinking, while 'what psychologists say' has given occasion for further wondering about soldier-play and war games.

And yet, having perused the book and admired not only its scholarship but also the beauty and the felicity of the copious illustrations that form an integral part of it and that make it a typical Batsford product, I am left somewhat unsatisfied. Not that Mr. Daiken is at fault, for he has amply fulfilled his purpose. So many questions have come crowding upon the problems he set out to solve. Where are the toys of yesteryear? Where are they now, the old familiar playthings? Why do London boys no longer spin tops? And what of the marbles of our departed youth? What are the social or economic implications of these variations in play habits? In a spirit of nostalgic hopefulness I invite Mr. Daiken to write the necessary corollary for our informed delight.

*Children's Toys throughout the Ages* will mean most to those who are still young at heart. In this category must be included all teachers. To them the author has a concluding word: ' . . . teachers and pupils alike (the italics are mine) could derive more value and stimulus from one hour's visit to doll-making shops, or the buildings where *Triang* steel toys are produced, than from many a classroom period on theoretical aspects of history and geography, science and geography'.

Alex. A. Bloom

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As the Speech Fellowship is closing at the end of August, this is the last opportunity that teachers will have of attending a Fellowship Vacation School.

Copies of the syllabus may be obtained from The Secretary, The Speech Fellowship, 1 Park Crescent, Portland Place, London, W.1.

## ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

More than 1,500 people concerned with children attended the 1953 Study Conference of the Association for Childhood Education International in Denver, Colorado, April 5th to 10th. Forty-six states in U.S.A. were represented and eight other countries.

*Strengths and Resources for Guiding Children* was the general theme for the Conference. The forty-three study and laboratory groups were in four sections: Using what we know about Human Development in Working with Children, Thoughtful Classroom Experimentation—A Way of Deepening Understanding of how Children Learn, Human Relations in the Education of the Child, and Laboratory Groups in Art, Music, and Science. At the last

session of the Conference the work was summarized in a panel discussion.

Addresses were made by Agnes Snyder, Adelphi College, New York; James Hymes, Jr., George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.; Helen Heffernan, Dept. of Education, California; and Elizabeth Gray Vining.

Kenneth E. Oberholtzer, Superintendent of Schools, Denver, and William Ross, President, College of Education, Greeley, discussed the educational progress and cultural background of Colorado.

The 1954 Study Conference will be held the week of April 18th to 24th in St. Paul, Minnesota.

## Directory of Schools

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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## A COMMENT ON STANDARDS : PARTICULARLY FOR PARENTS

G. A. Lyward, Director, Finchden Manor, Tenterden, Kent

**T**HIRTY-ONE years ago I wrote in a testimonial: 'If you want a scholar this is not your man; if you want a first-class athlete this is not your man. But if your firm would welcome an intelligent young man whose inclusion would result in those around him being happier and more effective, then I strongly recommend him.' I considered that the sixteen-year-old about whom I was writing was less 'qualified' than others who I knew were applying for the job but that he would far more certainly meet the needs of the firm because he was clearly moving towards maturity. Mr. Hemming wrote in *The New Era* last May: 'the needs of society and our knowledge of the dynamics of personal growth *together* supply the new outlook on standards that we require to-day.'

When I wrote that testimonial a colleague thought it was a strange one to come from the head of a department in a day-school of six hundred boys. But he added, 'I agree with you, only I wouldn't have written it, goodness knows why.' I wonder whether his agreement with what I said, placed alongside his astonishment that I said it, will shed some light on the 'problem' of standards. I think it may.

The chicken or the egg? Which comes first? I have not the slightest doubt—has anybody?—that skills in the basic subjects and felicity of expression play their part in assuring people that they are of account. I do not see how anybody can safely minimize the present urgent needs of an industrial society. Nevertheless, I am compelled by my experiences, even at the risk of being misunderstood, to make my particular contribution to a discussion of this 'problem' of standards. My emphasis in this brief article must go where I believe it should go, because I have had sharp reminders that there is a danger of 'Primarily Personal Qualities' and 'Primarily Social Qualities' being neglected again in favour of more imme-

diately measurable and even perhaps more immediately useful 'Academic' results. (I am using the headings of Mr. Hemming, taken from page 83 of the May issue of *The New Era*). May I attempt to minimize misunderstanding by again quoting a personal experience?

When in 1928 I left my last teaching post, at a public school, the Chairman of the Governors told me that it was I who had been responsible for the standard of work's rising by 40 per cent. My efforts, as I recall them, had been primarily directed towards creating the atmosphere within which I believed university scholarship candidates, a sixth form, a school rugby fifteen and a house of new boys (to name some of the units with which I was particularly concerned) would be enabled, and if necessary obliged, to live without serious evasion or bluff. Achievements, particularly cultural achievements, are not of secondary importance. But perhaps I may be allowed to call them derivative. It is because they derive from other experiences that they may have to be given an informal second place at certain times and for certain people. Of course it is often undesirable or impossible to discover whether a scholastic achievement is chiefly the result or the cause of emotional and social development. This points our dilemma, 'The chicken or the egg?'

I once had the pleasure of being asked by Dr. Susan Isaacs if she might quote a statement from an editorial I had written in *Home and School*. It was a simple enough statement, but it had taken her fancy. 'Have you ever heard of anybody's saying about a baby, "Stop feeding that baby on milk or he will never want meat!"?' The inevitable reply is, 'Don't be silly!' Everybody just knows and takes for granted that by means of milk, enjoyed, baby is prepared for other food. There is a vital relation between the milk and—shall we say?—meat. One thing leads to



another. The immaturity of the baby's whole body makes it easy to say, without any fear of being contradicted, that there are certain challenges which cannot be made with any hope of response.

Now listen at various keyholes. 'Take this for telling lies!'; 'Don't be a baby, of course you can do it'; 'Be a brave little man'; 'Little ladies don't behave like that'. Were they 1920 keyholes or 1953 keyholes, and if you heard such remarks what did you feel about them? Many people will probably still be prepared to say that they find nothing wrong with them, but others would say that they smack of the days before we had the knowledge we now have of how children develop. The harmlessness of such remarks, let alone their usefulness, depends upon many things. One of these is the age and previous experiences of the child to whom the remark is made. Again this will seem 'obvious' once it is said, but not all those who agree that it is obvious will act more creatively or humanely towards children afterwards. That is very interesting and very disturbing.

Each of the above and similar remarks to children constitutes a challenge and suggests that failure should be met by punishment—*ought* to be met by punishment or continued insistence. That 'ought' is behind the 'problem' of standards. What I will call abstract indignation causes prejudice on one side of the fence and resentment on the other. Let us hope that such abstract indignation does not increase the panic about lowered standards.

Life, we would all agree, is in one aspect a challenge and full of punishments. Is it true that because of this 'the sooner he learns not to lie or tell stories', 'the sooner she starts behaving like a little lady'—the better? Most good parents at the beginning of this century would have been at least inclined to assent to that. Since then, however, we have not been so sure of the usefulness of learning that may be unrelated and untimely. The fixed standard has too frequently been found to have stood between a child and his wellbeing—both as a child and subsequently.

The word 'weaning' is well known. One thing led to another when the one was milk and the other was meat. But these other matters, surely they are quite different. Whereas the child could not be blamed for not holding a cup at the age of one month, we know that quite little children can

be convicted of fibbing and slapped for it and we know that quite little children can be threatened or persuaded into behaving well. So why not always 'deal' with the child's 'bad' behaviour or shortcomings in his work without more ado? What good can come of leaving us parents lost—without standards?

It is not easy to reply briefly and I have much sympathy for the parent who is confused. Suppose it is suggested that the 'whole baby' is engaged when he drinks the milk and that it is not always the whole child that is engaged when he is acting bravely and being well-behaved, or learning French verbs? Is that worth considering? How much does it matter if a child is honest, well-mannered, thoughtful, up to scratch, with only one part of himself? What may be happening to the rest of him? This, asked here in very unscientific language, is the question that has been put to us all in recent years. It has disturbed those places where 'standards' were conveniently and over-confidently applied in respect of learning and behaviour. Many parents are terribly confused.

It seems to me that the vital question is: How far is the child doing what he does with his whole self—his 'heart and mind and soul'? Is his heart in his work and play, is he co-operating in freedom of spirit, is his homework spoiling the quality of his sleep, are his friendships free? Or is there a serious gap between the part of him which is answering a challenge and the rest of him? Is he implicitly asking us to get between him and that fear or seduction which is compelling or luring him to be unreal in his bravery or politeness or success as he makes a dangerously partial response? How much of his energy is he using up to save his face?

In the olden days of not so long ago, we were not awake to the dangers of the partial response, partly perhaps because we knew it sometimes could not be avoided. We were concerned perhaps with what neighbours were thinking, with how much trouble the child was causing us, or with a lifeless picture of 'what ought to be'. Some of these and similar concerns are quite important, but they are not as important as a person's capacity for learning from life, tolerating the existence of others, staying the course, 'dying daily'.

Not for one moment am I proposing that we wait until it will cost the child nothing to be



brave or well-mannered or considerate or successful at, say, mathematics. But Mr. Hemming's reminder that about one out of every ten children is liable to be rejected by his classmates tells us that many children have precious little to spare. I know these in their dozens for I preside over a community for emotionally disturbed but intelligent (often highly intelligent) adolescents. My colleagues and I know that we must keep their emotional poverty in mind and wait for the moment to challenge. But we do interweave such waiting with other immediate challenges which are not so unlike certain of those conveyed to children by parents and teachers of fifty years ago. We can, for the most part, trust our mixture to be nourishing, that is to say, educative. How eager they are—in due course—to learn; and how quickly they learn—in due course—later on.

Nowadays many people are concerned as to how far a child 'does' this or that with the whole of himself and how far what he does is only a bit of bluff or is a true indication of what he 'is' at the time when he does it. It is indeed a matter of timing, with an eye on the child rather than on the amount he has added to what he knew last year or on the new virtue which 'should have been acquired by now'. Ought to be known. Ought to be acquired. Even talk about virtues which sounds qualitative can hide an acquisitive and quantitative approach.

A child can give and take only after he has been nourished. Some children need to take more and for longer than others. Often it is the big-hearted who have, as it were, more to fill up. Taking, however, will look dishonest or selfish to those who have expected it to cease. Yet the wrong kind of interference and stricture by parents or teachers with the life of a child who is taking may deflect him into taking in other stranger ways for a still longer period. He may find himself labelled delinquent or backward and then it will take more time while he is re-stored by those who are willing and able to stand between him and whatever is compelling him to remain unfulfilled and partial in his response to challenge.

Security is a keyword. The little child maintains his security partly through play and imitation of grown-ups which are not unconnected with the good *within* the old 'standards'. Later on, it is loving and wise and effective to throw out a

hint or an order which will make the child aware of, say, the needs of old people or the helplessness of two people to do what it takes three to do. Nor is a reminder of what courage can achieve amiss; always provided that these orders, reminders, hints do not amount to or mount up to challenge which shakes his security. If they do that then, whether it is in regard to social behaviour, self-expression or control of standard of work, they may result in the 'gap', the jerk where there should be a flow . . . the response from one part only. This can perhaps be called conduct rather than response, perhaps reaction rather than action. It is valuable, or at least harmless, only where it is followed at not too great an interval of time by a true, living, felt appreciation of what has happened. But this latter, we must remember, may at times take the form of mild rebellion, laziness or moodiness, inability to concentrate.

The child is not simple. His eagerness is both his strength and his weakness. Loving children is both too easy and too hard for most of us. Therefore we do need some way of knowing them, even if we cannot through the application of standards know always just where we are with them and what point they themselves have reached. Daily decisions as to what approaches shall be made must be intuitive—how wise Miss Churchill appears to me to be when she insists upon that.

We are dealing with the fear that there are no longer any standards. But surely here is the test question—how emotionally secure is this or that child? Is the challenge coming to one who feels he 'belongs' and 'counts' and is loved for himself and not merely for what he can do or does do; in other words, how whole or how partial is his response likely to be?

For twenty-three years, since I became a psychotherapist, I have been discovering more and more certainly that if you deepen the level at which a group lives you find that clearer thinking, fluency, artistic discrimination, basic skills and other skills follow. But you must not waver in your main aim and place it on a level with the dictation of achievement (avowed or not avowed) or your education will become acquisitive and quantitative—credit seeking. The poor creatures will forget that they are also creators.

In our community the social situations and



personal issues are highly educative in ways they do not, so to speak, set out to be. The leisure becomes informed; academic needs invoke personal effort and enjoyment and co-operation; all this and more so long as goals are forgotten and the amount is not worshipped (this looks after itself as it will ever do for the alert and eager who have come, through shared relaxation, to 'will the means with the end').

Certainly emotionally disturbed adolescents cannot gain academically and culturally if they are not protected in varying degrees from a more or less inflexible time-table and from so much that a really wise inspector knows has so frequently 'educated' children in school away from wholeness of life. All the subjects of a curriculum can minister to the child and his society. It is an irony of my life that I came to healing through a discovery of how to use 'subjects' to release and emotionally re-educate young people, but now have so frequently to plead or insist that they should be protected from subject-teaching in so far as it can do harm. Of the four groups listed by Mr. Hemming in the May number of this journal, are not his groups III and IV the essential conditions upon which the other two may have to wait—to their own gain, and indeed at times for their very life.

When bluff is not needed and there is willingness to say and write what is 'felt and thought' rather than what teacher wants, there comes an alertness and honesty and sensitiveness which makes every talk and activity personal, ensuring that there is no serious lack of the experience 'It dawns on me.'

Ponder, then, over the standards as they were once applied by parents and teachers. Ask yourself how often you have found it possible to attack or criticize a child who was failing in regard to any of them without developing or increasing a sense of insecurity and painful separation in the 'offender'. Recall how hard it was to 'make it up' when, as a fourteen-year-old you had quarrelled with your friend. Remember how grateful you were to the person who somehow made you absolutely sure that he would not laugh at you or alarm you or over-challenge you when he was teaching you to swim. Contrast him with the person who merely said 'you can trust me' but never managed to convince you that you could safely let go. Note how, even now, you can

make all the difference to somebody from whom you have had to borrow a pound-note if you say convincingly, 'Now don't be at all shy about reminding me if I forget about it. I really really shall not mind.' And, while we are with the word 'forget', acknowledge how hard most people find it to say quite simply 'I forgot' instead of 'I was about to . . . but just at that moment . . .'

In my community I feel I must resist attempts to persuade me into trying to make the best of two incompatible worlds. I would say after forty-one years' experience, that the basic skills develop and cultural and academic advance takes place in a sort of inverse proportion to much that is ordinarily considered essential. I do not propose to dogmatize here concerning the schooling of those who have not clearly shown themselves to be emotionally and socially retarded or unstable. But I suspect that what I have found to be the way for these latter is not without significance for the so-called normal and those who teach them. For I sense a real wish in teachers to raise the academic and cultural level and no longer merely to measure and praise and reward a partial response in their pupils.

The deepening of community or group life so that real security brings a realization of a membership one of another that waits to be realized—this must be our first consideration. Within that life the drag of the gang or the herd can be recognized for what it is, and then fear and loneliness are overcome instead by love. Then all kinds of varying challenges can be made intuitively—that is better than with an eye to standards. But the intuition must derive and develop out of the deep level of group life. Academic and other efforts which replace membership by contract and sap energy are suspect, however satisfactory the immediate results may appear to be to the individual or to the community of which he is a member.

Meanwhile, if I am asked for practical help for a 1953 puzzled parent, I would say: Mix up the challenges *you* were given (which are bound to slip out!) with words and deeds which suggest effectively that you are not idolatrously worshipping the standards implied and that you will be at hand should any challenge cause too great confusion or loneliness or guilt. So prove you a guide with a sense of direction rather than a judge.



# CAN A CHILD BE SHARED ?<sup>1</sup>

Margot Hicklin, Psychiatric Social Worker

'And the other woman said, nay, but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, no, but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son.'—(KINGS I, 3, 22).

WHERE do we draw the line between the parent's child and the teacher's child? Anyone who has spent time and thought in talking to groups of parents and teachers will have felt the need of Solomonic wisdom in approaching the imaginary but dangerous borderline that exists in the minds of these two kinds of people—who are often, individually, the same kind of people underneath. It is clear that we are dealing with their idea of their own rôle and with their idea of 'the' child rather than with any objective differences in themselves or in their children. Take as an example some frequent misunderstandings occurring on the semantic level. Mr. Hemming's book title *The Child is Right* is often misquoted as *The Child is Always Right*, and appropriate indignation is directed at the inappropriate idea. Nevertheless, is there not some anti-parent implication in the title, even without the distortion? Or take the slip of the pen or of the tongue often made by teachers in putting 'capital' punishment instead of 'corporal' punishment. *Verbum sap.*—a breaking through of more than the useful educational motive.

In group discussion, especially when groups are mixed and contain parents who are or were teachers, nurses or others who deal with children professionally, members can sometimes be helped to get much closer to their unacknowledged ideas of their separate rôles, awareness of which increases the readiness of both parties to cross the imaginary borderline between them.

Let us first look at the aspects of teacher and parent which the other finds difficult to accept. When a mother is summoned to school or finds cause to go there of her own free will, her mood is often that of being prepared to defend her offspring to the death—and her own reputation as a mother against all comers. This aggressive picture of a she-bear may be the first view the

teacher gets of that particular parent, and if there are real difficulties or complaints the teacher wants to discuss, the prevailing wind will be adverse to mutual understanding. No one would find anything to grumble at in this initial clash if after a frank talk, the original hostile tendency could be overcome and the two adults, in their mutual concern for the welfare of the child, could make a plan for future co-operation. Alas, this does not happen as often as one would wish. Something is in the way of that simple and reasonable solution. Somewhere, the teacher is angry with the mother and blames her for all that has gone wrong with the child in the school situation. Somewhere, too, the mother feels inferior and guilty because she has not been able to teach her child all the fine things the teacher knows and which the mother herself often longs to learn. In other words, each puts the other into the rôle of parent—the person in authority, the person who creates or enriches the child. Unmarried teachers are often understandably jealous of physical parenthood, but this does not fully explain this subtle projection. By claiming the 'good' or live part of the child as exclusively her own, either teacher or parent may resemble the false mother in Solomon's Judgment,—prepared to sacrifice the child rather than to give up possession or recognize spiritual parenthood in anyone else.

As a result of these unsatisfactory encounters, parents and teachers may find it hard to see each other as they really are or even to benefit from meetings or social occasions which every good school tries to arrange. So much deliberate education misses the point by overestimating its reach, or overstating its aims. In a recent series of broadcasts called *What is a Democratic Education*, the High Master of Manchester Grammar School several times used some variant of the phrase: 'The type of child we want to produce'. The assumption here is that 'we' (whether that includes parents or not) are agreed upon the type of child desirable, and also that 'we' are able, by our conviction that it is desirable, actually to produce this result in human beings.

<sup>1</sup> Some Reflections upon the Mutual Education of Parents and Teachers, based upon Group Work with both.



Here, the very general belief is expressed that an overwhelmingly large proportion of the child's being is within our power; how else could we claim to 'produce' it by education? This time we are not concerned with a semantic problem, although it is by picking out the use of this phrase that we are trying to illustrate a widespread conception; nor is this example implying any criticism of the broadcasts themselves or of the system of teaching advocated in them. This assumption of omnipotence is to be found frequently in every-day contacts with parents and teachers; the conflict between them is like that which often happens between fathers and mothers, and takes the form of saying 'my child' when it is good and 'your child' when it is bad. It is an attempt to claim the rôle of the creative and loving parent who is responsible for the living part of the child, and to put on to the other the rôle of incompetent or selfish parent who 'kills' the good in the child.

Explicit teaching about bringing up children, however useful, cannot get behind the scenes of the battle to the more universal difficulties involved in parent-teacher relationships which, as we have tried to show, are not to be wholly distinguished from parent-child relationships or even husband-wife relationships. Groups coming together for such study can, however, adopt ways of studying their subjects which allow them at the same time to study themselves as a group and, in doing so, to face these problems together. Professional and lay people and, best of all, groups consisting of both, are trying to do so with the help of someone to whom the principles of human dynamics, as indicated above, are familiar. Such groups are not, as a rule, formed for therapeutic purposes although a certain amount of healing should occur wherever misunderstandings and resentments are brought out into the open and, in so far as they are accessible, resolved. More than that, we experience in practice that many a student who comes to learn about a certain subject discovers other needs and other talents which lead to fulfilment in a hitherto unknown part of the personality. How does such a result come about, and how can we describe it without either claiming too much?

Some time ago, an adult education class met in a district which had not studied the psychology of children before, and where classes on other subjects had on several occasions dwindled away

from lack of interest. The twenty or so participants enrolled were mostly young mothers with several children—new babies included—but two nurses, two teachers and one or two other professional women took part. The syllabus, an elementary study of child development and child-care, did not differ from the ones in general use for such courses, and the books and pamphlets recommended were in no way beyond the reach of beginners on the subject. For two terms the work continued smoothly, except that there was some difficulty in complying with the regulation that essays had to be submitted at stated intervals. When, however, the end of the course approached, this seemed to the class a challenge to their newly-found collective existence and, upon their own initiative, they decided to work for a continuation of their meetings. The steps they took were interesting in themselves. First, the class secretary informed the lecturer of their intention; second, one of the students invited the others and the lecturer to her house for a discussion that turned into a social function as well as a business one. Thirdly—and here the lecturer had her biggest surprise—the hitherto pen-tied mothers put their ideas on paper in answer to a set of questions suggested by them jointly and drafted by the tutor. Here are the results which may be of general interest:

### 1. Why we attended the Course

To 'get away from home'; or because a friend suggested it; or because we had been always interested in psychology and wanted more knowledge about it. One or two had come up against emotional problems with their children; again, several felt that they had made mistakes with their older children, and wanted to avoid repeating these with the younger. One mother says: 'I felt it would put all my worries with which I had hitherto been shut up alone, on a much wider and more dignified basis. An important body was occupying itself with my special affairs . . .'

After the first ten lectures, the same mother says: 'I realized that here was just the help one needed and hoped for, given at a pace one could cope with. It was immensely cheering and uplifting.' Another woman's husband found that his wife's mind had become stimulated, and a third student says: 'the stimulation and interest that had been aroused by the subject generally, was giving me quite a new lease of life with my children.' For some members, the stimulation was coupled with another element: '. . . I had become intensely interested in Child Psychology as a subject, apart from any application to my own family. I also . . .



found myself looking forward to hearing the lecturer as a person, and to meeting fellow students and friends.'

This feeling of friendliness and unity among the group grew in the second term. 'The feeling of friendship with the lecturer and fellow students had grown stronger and I wanted to make it permanent', says one member. Another feels even more strongly about it: '... the thought of not continuing our studies upon so fascinating a subject during further sessions seemed quite inconceivable.'

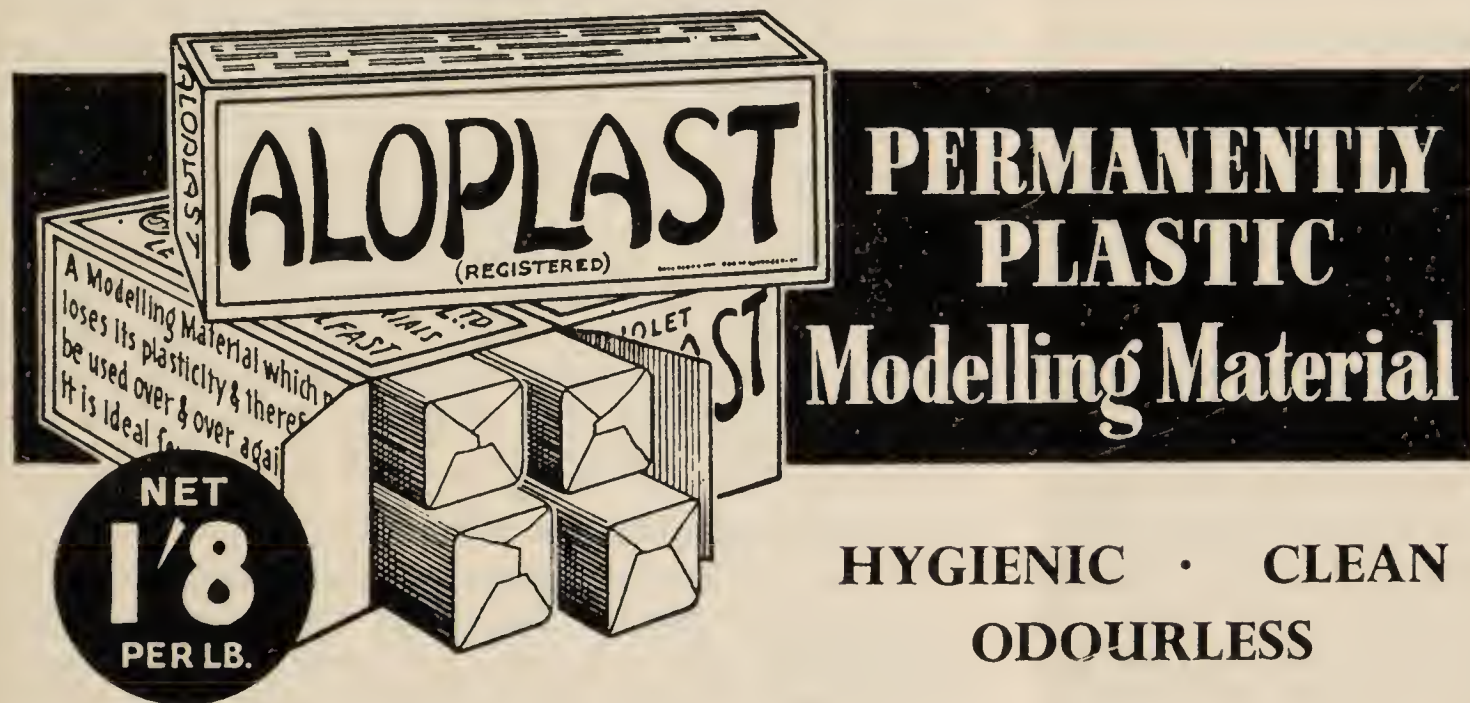
## 2. What we liked and disliked about the Group

'I enjoyed hearing the problems of other mothers, and realized that my own were no worse and perhaps not even as bad ...' is typical of the initial relief felt by nearly all members. The give-and-take of discussion was the most valuable thing to one of them, especially as 'students knew that their questions, even the less sensible and irrelevant ones, would be answered patiently.' One mother says that she valued 'watching and taking part in the development of the group from a number of isolated individuals till it became a unit of interest and study ...'

As work proceeded in the second term, this feeling of unity grew: 'the group seemed to have assumed an almost complete solidarity ...' and

at the same time the interest in the subject matter grows: '... our field of study became so fascinating that I found almost all my leisure reading was, and still is, spent in works relating to our subject.' It was felt, too, that the common knowledge of the group of mothers and the specialist approach of the lecturer were together actively helping people with their problems of child upbringing, although the lecturer had emphasized that individual solutions could not be expected from a course of study of this kind.

There were two points of dislike expressed: one, that the lecturer had to set essay subjects, in accordance with regulations, and that the members felt themselves unable to write these essays. The other, that as a group, we had failed to absorb every one of our members into this feeling of unity; (the purpose of study of one or two had been other than those enumerated above). Against this, one mother expresses pleasure in 'the general feeling of unity rather than criticism', and another in 'a friendly atmosphere which was helpful, restful and stimulating ... also the feeling that each member was contributing her share ...' On the intellectual plane, one mother said: 'Psychology had seemed, from my previous knowledge, a very young science with hypotheses and no laws. I found it stimulating to learn how much had been consolidated and made ready for practice ...'



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### 3. Some of the results we noted

'I find that my attitude towards my home life is now much happier; the constant pressure which besets one when one is always in the company of small children, no longer seems to press upon me . . . ' is one mother's view. Another puts a similar thought differently: 'The relationship with my husband and the two elder children has not changed noticeably, but I think my relationship with the baby is different from what it would have been if I had not attended the group. It is a more natural relationship . . . ' And a third says: 'I am sure both I and my children have benefited by my attendance . . . ' A fourth woman puts it like this: 'I find the home atmosphere easier and happier than before . . . again, I am more tolerant, but also sometimes offer advice which I feel I can do with a greater experience . . . ' Here is another point of view: 'I have become much more interested in psychology, and have tried to apply what I have learned where I can.' And here is someone who honestly admits her limitations: 'It did help me to understand the requirements of my child, though I couldn't really carry them out . . . ' And one mother, after saying she has learned to be more confident in her own handling of her rather nervous daughter, adds: ' . . . (I got) the feeling that maybe I know as well as they do (the other mothers), if not better, how to bring up my own child.'

### 4. Ideas that have changed

Though the results just mentioned show a change of underlying ideas as well as of attitudes, we thought it worth while noting some of the concepts that had undergone a conscious modification. 'Psychology as regards children need not be a selfish training but consider the trainee also . . . that the mother should not sacrifice herself too much and so lose her individuality, lessen her character which will have repercussions on her family . . . ' is one way of saying it. The way another student puts it is: 'I have realized that the love and care of the mother is even more important than I thought; . . . it seems that one way to bring about a peaceful, happy world is to bring up happy children.' She sums up by saying that the great lesson for her was not to expect too much of people, of her own children and of human nature generally . . . This general feeling is echoed by another mother who says: 'I have gained a more patient outlook upon life as a whole.' It will be realized that these few remarks cannot tell the whole story of the changes brought about in each person, as they are incidental to her whole life setting; but there is a good deal of agreement about the general development from personal need to group co-operation, and from this to wider generalizations and abstractions.

This becomes especially noticeable when we turn from the lessons learned to plans for future study. The wish to continue with the subject, even during the summer months when no course of lectures is offered, has led to a private meeting of the group

to discuss how they might carry on in the meantime: 'We would like to keep in touch with other members, and to attend films on Child Psychology' is one expression of opinion. Almost the same words are used by a student who adds: ' . . . also read books, etc., to keep in touch with the excellent work', and another says almost pugnaciously: 'I feel that during the summer months we should definitely fight for existence.' Occasional meetings during the summer months are the general desire; some wish to get to know one another better, others 'to keep alive the strong group spirit so that during the next autumn session we shall be ready to continue together our studies in child psychology . . . '

### 5. Where do we go from here?

'During next autumn session, I would like the group to go through the syllabus again, going more deeply into psychological theory and studying problems in more detail.' Here is one student who wants to penetrate deeper into the subject; another one is more in favour of 'special attention to the problem of education in world citizenship. It seems to me that we mothers may, by our studies, and by the application of the theories so acquired, be able to help in some small measure towards the solution of what at present seem insoluble world problems.' The balance between the two views is expressed in these words by a third mother: ' . . . more aspects of the normal child in the normal home, and an enlargement and continuation of our lectures during the last session.' Similarly, one other wishes the lectures 'to be continued in the same strain, and as our knowledge grows, the scope could be enlarged. The atmosphere created is ideal for learning.' This enlargement of the field is desired by one woman ' . . . especially in the way of education, the benefits or otherwise of the big school which moulds to a pattern or following a narrower training such as art or music. Also the value of adult education . . . '

### 6. Some individual views

'There should be more lectures specially made for women who on the whole work far too hard physically and do not get really any mental stimulus to keep them happy. Lectures which would take women out of their home and environment and which would be near at hand, and which would not require physical effort such as bus journeys or essay writing would go a long way towards making many a home a much more happy place.' On the question of writing essays, another mother has strong views too: 'I was grateful for the fact that our lecturer did not insist on regular written work although she did set a subject for written work each week for those who had time to contribute in this way—but as the lectures were attended by mothers of anything between one and three children there were few who found themselves able to submit written work, but on the other hand many, such as myself, who were able to carry out in a practical way and with immediate and



gratifying effect the advice contained in the weekly lectures.' Another comment is on 'the impermanence of the arrangements. It would have been much more satisfying to know that we could continue in our group from strength to strength after we had found so much together.' Almost the same thought comes from another mother: 'It would be a great pity if we could not continue to expand our lectures and our knowledge.' And here is a good reason given for this continued study: 'I feel far too much has up till now been left to what is considered "mother instinct", while training in all other things has become so essential. One has only to try to cook a meal, make a frock, paint a house or even write an essay without any experience or training to realize the value of education!' The need for gradual training in intellectual activity, is expressed in another form as follows: 'I found it difficult to take notes . . . it was delightful just to listen . . . personally, I need training to retain the impression made by such lectures.' And finally, a personal experience which may well apply to a good many women who have not the gift of expressing themselves so forcibly: 'I feel . . . that a course of this kind is fulfilling an urgent need. Mothers of young children are finding life a great physical strain these days, and are feeling intellectually frustrated. I myself, seem to have been born again mentally since I took the course. Before that I was in a state of mental apathy and stagnation and vowed I was too tired for intellectual pursuits. Now I read once again with avidity. The course provided just the sort of mental stimulus I so urgently needed.'

Any teacher reading these notes will be struck by the mothers' great desire for further education, which goes far beyond the subject of child upbringing into the fields of intellectual and creative endeavour. In these, many teachers excel. There is also the constantly repeated wish to make use of the experience of parenthood in a wider social setting in which detached understanding of oneself and others is needed. In this, too, the teacher, by virtue of her training and experience, is likely to be the more knowledgeable.

I have not room enough to balance this account with one in similar detail of classes attended mainly by teachers of every degree of experience. Such an account should be most useful to parents, whose understanding of the teachers' problem is inadequate. All I can say here is that, where the size of the group allowed of the seminar method being used, coupled with intensive individual study and tutorial help, the changes in teachers' attitudes could be summed up in similar terms to those used by the parent group. Above all, the reverse movement from the intellectual to the emotional understanding of children and of one's

rôle in relation to them, was fostered. The results of this could be seen in the development of their discussions on difficult or 'problem' children, who turned from being 'nuisances' into cherished friends, towards whom especially warm 'parental' feelings might be permitted.

What, then, remains of the fundamental difference between the 'parent's child' and the teacher's, once these resistances to understanding have been, if not resolved, at least brought out into the open for examination? In the past, too much attention may have been paid to the importance of physical parenthood and child-care, whereas the creative effort involved in education had been labelled a substitute, or at best, a sublimation of parental love. Now we know that the growth and development of a child is as important as the endowment it receives from its inheritance; and we know that many a mother is unable to allow this growth to happen, because she fears to lose some of the instinctive satisfactions that the close dependence of the baby upon the feeding mother provides. In the early days of our advances in understanding the child, mother love was understood only in its positive, idealized aspect, and the teacher had to take over some of the features of the forbidding ogre who curbs this exclusive relationship by her demands. The teacher finds it hard to shake off this rôle under which he or she may have suffered not a little, and it will be of tremendous benefit to the teaching profession when the maturing concepts of child psychology penetrate into the schools. The feeding and nurturing rôle, hitherto reserved to the parent, will then be seen to apply with equal value to the educational situation. In this way, no longer need the teacher's rôle be one of 'producing' citizens or scholarship students; on the other hand, the inclusion of the parent in the teaching situation will complete the sense of community, without the dangerous break across the imaginary borderline within the child. Viewed in this way as an extended family group, parent and teacher need no longer dispute one another creative parenthood; conflicts between them will and must occur, for growth proceeds through the meeting of opposites. Those concerned with bringing parents and teachers into relation with each other, can therefore confidently apply the technique of Solomon when it is interpreted as a challenge to the true creativeness of both parent and teacher.



# SALUTE TO BEDALES

Paul Roberts

THIS summer Bedales School celebrates its Diamond Jubilee and the occasion seems a fitting one for paying tribute to a great educational achievement. If the present account appears to those who know the school from the inside to fail in comprehension of its true inwardness, it is to be hoped that they will remember that it is merely the impressions made by it on an outsider over the last twenty-five years, that we all see in anything only what our limitations permit us to see and that, anyhow, we inevitably see things through our own spectacles.

First for bare bones. The school takes its name from a country house near Haywards Heath in Sussex where J. H. Badley opened in 1893 with three boys and a staff of six, an interesting indication of the faith which was to sustain and carry it from strength to strength through the vicissitudes of the following sixty years. Girls were first admitted in 1898 when there were already sixty boys in the school and it was not until 1920 that the numbers of the two sexes became approximately equal. There are now, including Dunhurst, the Junior School, something over 320 boys and girls. In 1900 the school moved to its present site at Steep on the northern outskirts of Petersfield in Hampshire, where all its buildings have been designed and built for their specific purposes and are the envy of all but a very few of the boarding schools in the country.

The last thing the founder would wish is that his plan of education should be judged by its wordly successes and yet an impressive list of these, for the size of the school at least, shows that the deeper and truer things he cared for were not a handicap to material success. During the last seven years the school has gained thirteen open scholarships or exhibitions to universities and four musical scholarships. In later life distinction has been won in many different spheres. Two Victoria Crosses, a George Cross, five Knighthoods, three Fellows of the Royal Society, an Ambassador, a Principal Medical Officer to the Ministry of Health, a Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, a Director of the Tate Gallery, a Chief Engineer to the B.B.C., several of the leading craftsmen in the country, Presidents of both the Oxford and of the Cam-

bridge Boat Clubs and many 'blues', all this and much more from a school whose total list of traceable old pupils has not yet reached 2,500 and a school which, although it holds an entrance test, does not admit candidates wholly, or even mainly, on the grounds of academic or intellectual achievement.

Whenever one contemplates Bedales it is inevitable that the picture should be largely filled by its great founder who, although he retired from the headship eighteen years ago, is still agile and forward-looking in mind and unusually vigorous in body as he approaches his ninetieth year. During the later years of his headship the writer once said to one of his colleagues, 'The "Chief" must have some wonderful stories to tell about the early struggles of the school', and the answer he got was, 'Well, you know, no one ever hears them; he never talks about the past but only about the future.' The same thing is true about him even to-day. Simple, courtly, gentle, shy, modest, tolerant, bearing fools gladly. It is unlikely that he himself realizes how much he does to draw lesser folk a little nearer to his own stature by his tolerance and encouragement of them. And yet strong. The school could not have become what it has if there had not been a single-minded and inflexible pursuit of those ideas which he considered fundamental and a realistic translation of them into the practices of everyday life.

Like all educational plans which have made serious contributions to the development of our educational philosophy, that of Bedales was based on a digested and mature philosophy of life. There is not space here to make even a short analysis of J. H. Badley's philosophy nor is this writer the person to do it. For any one sufficiently interested it is to be found in almost any one of his published works.<sup>1</sup> Very shortly its basis is a respect for human personality, a belief in its uniqueness and in its wholeness. Every human individual is a unique creation and is, or can be, a whole person, a balanced combination of head, heart and hand. There is a close interaction between wholeness of personality and fullness of life. Only whole people can live fully and only by living fully can one become a whole person.

<sup>1</sup> Notably *The Will to Fuller Life and Form and Spirit*.



The educational implication was clear. The uniqueness of every child must be respected and there must be room and freedom and fullness and simplicity of life for him so that he may develop to his maximum potential that wholeness of personality which is his birthright.

To-day all this may sound a little trite. It is the common coin of every educational conference though it must be confessed that it still gets more lip service than practical application. But half a century ago, when it was blue-printed by J. H. Badley and given sane and realistic expression in the planning and development of his school, it was revolutionary. It is not easy to-day to appreciate the courage and faith which must have been required to persevere as he did, in the face of an atmosphere which was critical and even hostile and derisory and of short term results which were not always wholly promising. The Bedales of to-day and the lives of hundreds of men and women throughout the world are the justification of his faith.

The 'Chief' has been singularly fortunate in his successors. F. A. Meier, 1935-46, a vital and lovable personality, a skilful and shrewd administrator and a brilliant teacher did much to give

the school financial stability. He advanced its prestige by establishing high academic standards and demonstrating that these were not incompatible with the freedom and fullness of life for which the school stood and with the breadth of curriculum, the Music, Drama, Arts, Crafts and innumerable hobbies and interests which were regarded as an essential part of the plan.

H. B. Jacks, who has been headmaster since 1946, combines with a deep and sympathetic understanding of the ideals of the founder a mind of his own which will not permit any sort of crystallization to set in and a clear-sighted capacity to put first things first and not to lose sight of the wood for the trees. It is very certain that so long as he is there the Bedales light will not grow dim, nor will the integrity which has always characterized it be diminished.

What are the main things that over the years strike the visitor to Bedales? If he is unfamiliar with co-education, the natural mixing of boys and girls together may appear a little startling, but, if he is familiar with it he will take that for granted knowing that it had to be a concomitant of any real fullness of life.

## HISTORY BUILDS THE TOWN

By Arthur Korn

'To master the town one must first know it'. With this principle in mind the author sets out to establish the laws which govern the town, its birth, growth and decline, and determine its structure. From the primitive nomads to the first permanent settlement, from the guild to the modern factory, and finally to the gigantic plans for irrigating the vast Central Asian steppes and deserts; throughout history man has been struggling with Nature and learning to control her. We therefore see the town as a product of society, a reflection of its productive forces, and its class structure throughout the ages. The work is profusely illustrated with a great variety of collotype plates, two being reproduced (by letterpress) on the facing page.

The author is lecturer on Town Planning at the architectural Association School of Architecture, London.

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The first thing, perhaps, after this will be the simplicity of life. There can be no real fullness or richness in life without a basis of simplicity. In spite of the increased complexity which the last fifty years has brought and in spite of the fact that so much more elaborate equipment is nowadays demanded for the education of children, Bedales still strikes the outsider as having, in common with the Quaker schools, retained much of that fundamental simplicity of life which was so dear to the heart of its founder.

Although the visitor will be struck by the atmosphere of activity in the place—it is a rare thing to come across an aimless child—he will, if he explores a little further, be still more struck by what might be called an absence of stunts. There is never any sign of anything being done for effect or for eyewash. Every activity gives the impression either of being related to first

principles or of arising from the spontaneous interest of the children.

It may surprise some people who have not seen for themselves and have heard only garbled or prejudiced accounts of the school that it is hard not to be impressed by an atmosphere which can only be described as religious. No one can be present at the ordinary Sunday service without feeling that here is an act of worship which is simple and true and moving. It is needless to say that in the daily life there is no sign of either formalism or of pietism and yet, more than in any other school known to the writer, there is a feeling of being in a community which is in the deepest sense religious.

All those who respect the work done by Bedales will hope that it may continue to render to English education during the second half of the century as distinguished service as it has done during the first.

## EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH<sup>1</sup>

*A. Pinsent, Advisory Officer, Faculty of Education, University College of Wales*

THE National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales was formally constituted in 1945.

The idea of a national research institute in education was by no means new and, due in great part to the influence of the late Sir Fred Clarke, an embryonic organization had begun to work, albeit somewhat fitfully, before 1945. From this the reconstituted Foundation took over some researches already in progress, started additional special investigations, and set up a section for the production of standardized tests. Since 1947, the Foundation has published two lists of researches in education and educational psychology covering the period 1918-1949; two reports on allocation to secondary education; an investigation of the educability of cerebral palsied children; a survey of rewards and punishments in schools; and some fourteen standardized tests. The Foundation has now in hand researches on an individual intelligence test for blind children; on the effects of coaching on performance in standardized objective tests; on the nature and use of cumulative school records; and on visual aids.<sup>2</sup>

This record reveals the *ad hoc* nature of the

research programme hitherto, a feature inevitable during the early years of a research institute in the field of education where there is so little consensus of opinion concerning what such an institute can and should do and such disgustingly meagre financial provision for doing it. In these conditions, work for which there is an insistent immediate demand must be undertaken at the expense of a long-term plan.

Long-term research, particularly where teams of workers are involved, needs a consistent policy. The authorities of the National Foundation are very well aware of this. They have published, recently, a 'Statement of Policy' in which a long-term plan of work is set out.

This statement is noteworthy for at least two reasons:—(a) it makes public the intentions of the governing body thereby making it possible for the Foundation's work to become, as it should be, a matter of national interest; (b) the policy is based on a principle of first-rate importance for educational theory and practice, namely, that *the proper function of education is guidance*.

### Education as Guidance

Guidance, in this context, must not be confused with vocational guidance, or with clinical child guidance concerned with the alleviation or cure of disorders of behaviour and of the learning processes. It is, instead, a description of 'one

<sup>1</sup> Review of *Statement of Policy* issued by the National Foundation for Education Research in England and Wales. 16 pp. Copies of this may be obtained from the Director, National Foundation for Educational Research, 79 Wimpole Street, London, W.1, price 6d. per copy, or 3d. per copy for orders of 25 and over.

<sup>2</sup> See Sixth Annual Report, 1951-52.



fundamental way of looking at the processes of education and the activities of the teacher—the mediating between the needs, powers, interests and experience of the growing child on the one hand and the needs, responsibilities, opportunities and values of adult life on the other’.

Guidance, from this point of view, includes teaching as a special case. The teacher’s function is to provide opportunities for learning and growth; and to assess progress, discover and diagnose difficulties in learning and development as they occur within the school and apply appropriate remedies. The administrator’s business is to organize the services necessary for these educational processes.

This underlying principle reflects an important change in the recent ‘climate’ of educational opinion. It was fashionable, formerly, to envisage education within the school as a process of submitting pupils regardless of age, ability and interests to the authority of a logically-structured academic subject or set of subjects. It is now regarded, in theory at least, as a process of making a curriculum and school organization into a medium for promoting optimum growth and development of individual pupils. Thus the Foundation’s policy is soundly based upon a promising trend in modern educational thinking.

This principle makes practicable the Foundation’s intention to distinguish clearly between a basic long-term research programme and *ad hoc* investigations. *Ad hoc* investigations of urgent practical import will still be considered as occasion and finance permit; but they will not be allowed to prejudice the future development of the proposed basic programme. This distinction is sound. For an example of the way in which immediate practical administrative demands can divert attention and effort from fundamental research we need to look no further than the use of standardized objective tests for selecting grammar school entrants at age eleven plus. For reasons which are by no means educational, secondary education has been identified with a grammar school career. However, so few grammar school places are available in comparison with the numbers now statutorily entitled to secondary education that the administrator’s immediately urgent problem is *how to exclude* all but a minority of pupils from a grammar type of schooling in such a way that no interested parties can claim that the exclusion is unfair. Thus, attention is diverted from research into the proper function of standardized tests as instruments of educational guidance (that is as reliable objective estimates of the relative capacity and progress of individual pupils) to the elaboration

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|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
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of defence mechanisms for educational administrators. The suspicion that this is the case is, probably, one reason for much of the layman’s suspicion of the tests.

## Major Problems of Educational Guidance

Many people still hold obstinately to the opinion that we already know as much as need be known about education and teaching methods. The fact is, however, we know very little, in detail, *in the context of education as guidance*. The problems of guidance as set out in the ‘Statement of Policy’ are:

(a) Pupils and their personal development—abilities, aptitudes, attainments, interests, character, and mental health.

(b) The curriculum—ultimately, this must include what is necessary for the requirements of society, but at the same time the content must be adapted continuously to the developing capabilities and experience of individual pupils. How can the adaptation be most effectively organized?

(c) Methods of learning and teaching—their comparative efficiency *in a given context*, and their *appropriate uses*, e.g. formal versus ‘activity’ methods; individualized learning and instruction versus group techniques.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At the moment too many methods are adopted on an ‘all or none’ basis as being entirely correct or entirely wrong irrespective of the conditions in which they are used.



(d) Standards of attainment—what standards can reasonably be expected of pupils *when attainment is related to ability and experience, and to the efficiency of different teaching methods rather than to chronological age?*

(e) Curricula and institutions—what variety and balance of courses and schools are required to deal adequately with items (a), (b), (c), and (d) above?

(f) Teachers—their selection, training and further education.

The second aspect of the teacher's work—assessment of capacity and progress and diagnosis of difficulties will be catered for by the Foundation through the further development of its test services. Also, since diagnosis should lead to remedial work, the discovery of the most effective remedial techniques will be an important part of the Foundation's programme.

### Three Stages of Schooling

Educational guidance must be continuous throughout the years of schooling but research into it can be directed in relation to three main stages, namely:—primary, transition, and secondary.

The predominant theme of the Foundation's programme at the primary stage will be 'Guidance in the Primary School with special reference to teaching methods and standards of attainment in language and number.' In this stage, in addition to the general problems already indicated, attention will be directed to problems of learning readiness (in other words, when is the best time to introduce pupils to new tasks and methods); and to the most effective use of primary school records as an integral part of the procedure for transfer to secondary education.

The transition stage is said to include a group of related problems (of which allocation is already being investigated intensively), namely, effects of differing school environments and of coaching and practice on performance in standardized tests; procedures for assessing borderline candidates; late transfer to grammar schools; selection for technical and commercial courses; use of school records and teachers' assessments; methods of marking.

In the secondary stage the following main lines of work are envisaged:—studies of the adjustment of primary school leavers to new conditions of secondary school life; continuity in subject teaching between primary and secondary schools; differentiation of courses and methods in relation to abilities and interests of pupils and to their probable vocational needs.

The Foundation will undertake special investigations if these can be financed independently of the basic research programme. As examples of such projects the 'Statement of Policy' names two:

—the standardization of an individual intelligence scale in Welsh, and studies in the personality development of secondary school children.

The above account indicates the general scope of the Foundation's long-term plans in so far as research is concerned. The Statement includes also notes on research methods appropriate to educational problems, finance, publications, and liaison with Local Education Authorities, Teachers' Associations, Universities, and international educational agencies.

### Priorities

In planning a research programme it is necessary to decide (a) what are the right questions to ask and (b) in what order should the questions be investigated.

Contrary to much misinformed general opinion, scientific research is not merely a process of collecting facts. If it were, its value for intellectual progress would be somewhere near the level of stamp-collecting. The permanent value of scientific research depends more on asking the right questions from a fruitful point of view than on collecting facts as such. So far as this is concerned the National Foundation's research policy seems to be well-founded on the concept of education as guidance.

The next problem concerns priorities. In the 'Statement of Policy' the priorities indicated are:

(a) *General*:—

Emphasis on applied research into problems of public need within the education service of the publicly maintained school system;

Very high priority to problems of allocation at eleven plus;

Immediate steps to set up enquiries into primary schools problems of language and number.

Studies in problems of secondary education to be undertaken as opportunities and resources permit.

(b) *Specific*. Within these wider topics certain more specific priorities are mentioned, namely:—

Studies of the incidence of abilities and interests appropriate to technical training;

Exploration of the problems of the 'secondary modern' type of school or department;

Production of new types of attainment tests particularly in English and particularly for use in primary schools;

Production of linked attainment and ability tests;

Investigation of a range of diagnostic and remedial instruments required for effective application of research findings in the classroom.

Assessment of the correctness of any order of priority is likely to be determined, in practice, by each individual assessor's most insistent practical problems. However, accepting the Foundation's emphasis on research into problems of public need within the publicly maintained service, some guide to a realistic order of priority might be indicated by reference to the difficulties which



seem to be felt most acutely at the present time by many practising teachers.

Hitherto, standards of expectation and assessment have been determined by the traditional framework, namely, 'elementary' schooling for the majority up to age fourteen; selection of a 'grammar type' from among elementary school pupils at age eleven plus; and grammar schooling for the selected minority with a view to university entrance examinations at age sixteen plus. In effect, university examination requirements have determined acceptable standards of attainment and efficient teaching methods as far down, in some cases, as the infant school.

However, as soon as the school system is conceived as one progressive course for all pupils from age five to fifteen plus, and acceptable standards of attainment and of teaching efficiency are estimated in terms of educational guidance, the traditional criteria need revision. The questions causing most concern to practising teachers at the moment seem to be:—

(a) What is secondary education if it is not preparation for a matriculation type of examination? In other words what ought to be done for the 'non-grammar' pupils now coming into secondary schools. This needs unbiased investigation of curricula and teaching methods in relation to abilities, temperaments and interests as well as to probable future occupation. This category includes, particularly, the secondary 'modern' problem as well as the problem of an adequate treatment of exceptionally gifted children.

(b) What should be the correct relation between a number of primary schools each sending pupils at age eleven plus to one common secondary school? What standards of attainment can the secondary schools reasonably expect of the primary school leavers in language and number? Can any definitive standards be prescribed for all pupils entering secondary education?

If, in terms of educational guidance and the 1944 Act no standards such as 'All entrants to secondary education at age eleven plus must be capable of such and such attainments in language and number' can reasonably be demanded then it follows

that secondary teachers must be prepared to undertake more individual or small-group techniques of teaching and classroom organization. In that case, in order to achieve a desirable continuity of treatment, the secondary teachers must have reliable records of the abilities and attainments of the individual primary school leavers.

(c) If primary education is no longer to be determined by a grammar school selection examination at age eleven plus, then what properly constitutes primary education in curriculum, organization and method?

Thus, the most urgent practical problems at the present time appear to centre round the period of transition, including at least the first year of post-primary schooling. In so far as this is a correct assessment it would indicate the following priorities for development:—

(i) determination of standards of attainment in primary school language and number which can reasonably be expected when equated with aptitudes and experience of pupils and efficiency of teaching methods instead of chronological age. This may need fresh types of attainment test.

(ii) Allocation studies undertaken for the purpose indicated in the 'Statement of Policy' namely, for making practical recommendations to local education authorities on the most satisfactory types of procedure

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to be followed in *matching pupils and courses in the secondary schools*. This section must of necessity include many of the 'secondary modern' problems.

(iii) Studies of the period of adjustment of primary school leavers to new conditions of secondary school life. This must include the problem of securing continuity of treatment, particularly in the basic subjects of language and number, as between the primary schools and the first secondary school year. This in its turn involves studies in methods of keeping primary school records and their systematic use for educational guidance in the secondary schools. It is also closely related to the objective determination of reasonable standards of primary school attainment.

(iv) Studies in primary education—curriculum, organization, and teaching methods.

## Education in Wales

The National Foundation is intended for educational research in England and Wales. The 'Statement of Policy' acknowledges the implications of this and mentions as a special investigation of high priority the production of an individual intelligence scale in Welsh.

So far as long-term research work in Wales is concerned the basic problems and order of priority are much the same as those indicated in the preceding paragraph. However, educational arrangements in Wales are complicated most horribly (from a research point of view) by the existence side by side of two different languages. The Welsh have adopted, officially, a bilingual policy. At the same time there is a serious lack of standardized attainment tests in language and

number *in Welsh*. Again, the problems of adjustment of primary school leavers to new secondary school conditions are made much more difficult, particularly in rural areas, by the fact that the predominant medium of instruction in the primary schools is the mother tongue—Welsh—while that in the secondary schools is predominantly English, in effect a foreign language.

The most urgent need in Welsh education is systematic and objective investigation of bilingual problems as they effect the schools. This is possible, only by the construction *in Welsh* of reliable tests of intelligence and attainment *standardized with respect to differing degrees of linguistic background*. As the 'Statement of Policy' notes, methods of co-ordinating the resources of the National Foundation with educational research work in Wales have already been discussed.

One feels that this 'Statement of Policy' is a timely document. It is also an important contribution to educational thinking which deserves to be widely read not only by administrators and research workers but by teachers and laymen concerned with education. It is most desirable that sufficient interest in the National Foundation's work can be aroused and maintained to ensure that the basic long-term research plans indicated in the statement will be adequately financed. Without adequate finance there can be no fundamental long-term research.

## The Things We See, No. 7.

*Lady Allen of Hurtwood and Susan Jellicoe. (Penguin Books, 5/-).*

This is a well-planned and illustrated Picture Book of Gardens. There are 119 photographs, each accompanied by a short descriptive paragraph, and the material has been collected from many countries.

The book is divided into two parts: The Home, and The Community, and opens with an Introduction. I wish the arrangement of this Introduction could have been designed to 'catch the eye' a little more. It is invaluable and it will be a thousand pities if it is not read with care and attention.

The Home section contains photographs under such headings as *Indoor Gardens, Balconies, Roof Gardens, Siting, Town Gardens* and *Country Gardens*. In the Community section the headings include *Communal Gardens for Flats and Homes, Parks, Children's Play, Schools, Work*, etc.

Under *Children's Play* is a picture of a Junk Playground in Copenhagen with a fairly full description of this special type of children's play space. The authors refer to the sight of 'two to three hundred children engrossingly

occupied' . . . 'a sight rarely enjoyed in the arid, expensively equipped playgrounds that are places of boredom for most children'.

Under *Schools* (No. 101) we see an interesting method of breaking up an area into 'spaces that are on a child's scale', an idea that might well be worth investigation when consideration is being given to some of our bleaker Nursery School gardens. I think it is a pity that No. 105 is the only picture illustrating a garden planned to satisfy the young child's desire for adventure and imaginative play. One can think of many schools in less favoured surroundings where this kind of play is equally, perhaps even more, possible. It is pleasant to see the younger children's playground in the Infant School screened by informal groupings of bushes and plants, where low seats—a frequent omission—are provided.

This is a booklet of ideas and 'pointers'. Too often people give no thought to the garden at all, whether it be the small private town garden, the school garden or the public park and playground. What was good enough before is good enough now. Time, money and labour are grievously misapplied, and the expert advice avail-

able is not asked for. The suitability of the garden for old or young, for tired sightseer, convalescent hospital patient, or the energetic teenagers is barely considered, and the intangible value of gardens in their effect on the human personality is blissfully ignored. Gardens grow slowly and mistakes are long-lived and costly to rectify.

This book should be in the hands of all garden-lovers, even if their garden is only a window-box. Especially one would like to see it on the desk of every Parks Superintendent and Education Officer, and the Chairman of their Committees. It is a unique book, and one to set people thinking about this most important part of our daily lives, and it seems to me to be worth more than its very modest price.

Margaret Thorne

Reviews of the following have been held over and will appear in the September-October issue:—

**The First Year in School**, E. R. Boyce (Nisbet)

**Our Times: A Social History, 1912-1952**, Vivian Ogilvie (Batsford)

**The Teacher was Black**, H. E. O. James and Cora Tenen

(Heinemann)



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS AND NOTES

## AUSTRALIA

The official history of the N.E.F. in Australia dates from 1937, when a memorable Regional Conference was organized by International Headquarters together with Dr. Harold Wyndham (now Director-General of Education in New South Wales). For this Conference a team of some twenty-five distinguished educationists from overseas countries visited each capital city, as well as New Zealand, holding lectures and discussions on *Education for Complete Living*. The ferment of controversy roused by this conference among professional educators and the general public resulted in the formation of a Section of N.E.F. in each of the six Australian States. The Tasmanian Section has two branches—Hobart and Launceston—and a branch of the N.S.W. Section has been formed in Armidale. A seventh Section was later formed in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. Total Australian membership is about 1,900.

Since Australia is so vast a country, it was felt necessary in 1944 to form a Federal Council of N.E.F., meeting in capital cities about every two years, through which the Sections could express their voice, at a federal level, on such broad issues as a basic educational policy and standards for Australia; the training and recruitment of school teachers; the education and assimilation of migrants; the problem of school examinations; the education of parents; the education of post-school youth and adults; the likely effect of television on children and the whole community.

A second important function of Federal Council is to organize visits to Australia of eminent educationists from other countries, for the purpose of maintaining international fellowship, of exchanging ideas on modern problems of education, and of holding conferences, forums and seminars on important educational topics. These visits have become a major educational event in Australian life, and very many teachers, administrators, parents and others, not all of them N.E.F. members, are stimulated to new thought and action by the ideas expressed and publicized. In 1946 a 'mass visit' of sixteen speakers from ten different countries was organized by the N.E.F. Federal Council to hold conferences session on *Education for International Understanding*. Two years later, Carleton Washburne and James Hemming lectured throughout Australia on *Democratic Living in Home, School and Society*; and in 1951 Margaret Mead, H. C. Dent and David

Jordan toured Australia with Charles Bull, Australian Federal President, the theme of the conference being *Education in a Changing World*. It is now proposed to bring to Australia in 1954 a team of overseas educationists to discuss two topics which are felt to be basically the province of New Education Fellowship thought and discussion—*A Philosophy of Education* and *The Psychological Bases of Education at Every Stage*.

The Federal and State Governments of Australia recognize the value of this and other N.E.F. work by granting some financial help, by facilitating the organizing of the conferences, and by giving leave to many teachers and other officers to attend conference sessions. The N.E.F. is also invited to send representatives to Federal bodies such as the Unesco Committee for Education, and to give evidence to the Royal Commission on Television and others.

The seven Sections and their Groups work autonomously according to the needs of their particular locality and the talents and energies of their members. For instance, during the past and present year, New South Wales has concentrated on three 'campaigns': (1) a critical examination of secondary education and a programme of suggested reforms; (2) creativeness in education, at all stages from early childhood to adult life; (3) the need for parent education and for Governmental and public recognition of its importance in preventing many serious problems in family, school and community life. This last campaign for parent education has been carried on vigorously by other N.E.F. committees—notably in Canberra (A.C.T.) and in Armidale, N.S.W. Interesting experimental group-work is being done in this field, as pilot projects which may well lead to a wide extension of the work.

*Further instances of the variety of N.E.F. work in the different Sections:* South Australian Section has had encouraging success in introducing the method of Individual Progression into infant and primary schools. Also S.A. has, like N.S.W., organized successful groups for the purpose of welcoming New Australians (migrants) and understanding their special needs. In February last, S.A. ran an unforgettable week-end Conference in the hills at Belair, where twenty-five 'old Australians' entertained as guests twenty-five 'new Australians', providing lectures and discussions on Australian art, music, natural history and early history. A typical guest-reaction to this week-end was this

sentence from a letter: 'Let me thank you once more for the most wonderful week-end I spent since I have been in Australia.'

Victorian Section has enjoyed working on a very rewarding long-term project of co-operating with the Kees Boeke International Exhibition. Work-groups were formed, schools were visited, a public exhibition entitled *Living and Learning in Victoria* was held last March; pamphlets were published and distributed explaining the exhibition and the principles of N.E.F., and the exhibits of work were finally shipped to Holland. Hobart Group has worked through study-groups to prepare and widely publicize valuable reports on such topics as Social Studies in Schools, Religious Instruction in Schools, the Effect on the Community of the 16-year Leaving Age, and the Impact of Radio and Television on the Child. Launceston Group has roused much interest in the N.E.F. Book Club by conducting discussion groups on recent Club books. Western Australia has paid special attention to the recruitment of teachers; and this Section, like South Australia, has been outstandingly successful in organizing conferences, panel discussions and seminars, among teachers and other officers of the Education Department.

Queensland Section has for some time held a series of widely varying discussions, ranging over the whole field of education. Now it is feeling that it might do better to adopt a single project at a time, involving keen group-study and leading to some definite action. Here is what Professor T. K. Ewer, President of Queensland Section, says about the part the N.E.F. might well play in that community:

'The Executive Committee hopes gradually to interest senior officials of the Department of Public Instruction, in the Fellowship's work. There is no room for complacency over the present state of education at primary, secondary or University level in Queensland. The raising of the school entry age to six years does not appear to me to be a serious matter, but I feel more concern over the relatively short period of training at the Teachers' Training College, and the continuing late age of starting secondary schooling. The need for a more liberal and flexible syllabus leading to a leaving certificate, instead of the present Senior Examination, allied to the institution of a special Matriculation Examination at the end of another year for the minority who go on to the University, are reforms which are becoming widely accepted as necessary.'



As a direct result of the Chichester International Conference of 1951, a ten-days' N.E.F. Summer School in Creative Activity was held last January at Frensham, Mittagong, N.S.W., attracting a membership of 110 men and women (aged from 18 to 70) from all N.E.F. Sections except Western Australia. Five groups worked with great delight and enriching new experience under five widely differing but equally inspiring leaders in Painting, Modelling, Music and Drama. The school was such a happy experience for all concerned, and drew its members so harmoniously into the work and philosophy of the N.E.F., that another such school is now being planned for next January, at Canberra, the Australian capital city.

All Australian Sections and Branches join in producing their N.E.F. journal *New Horizons*, which is sent to members as an important right of membership, and which also circulates among many more of the general Australian public than the N.E.F. This journal, together with *The New Era* and N.E.F. Book Club publications, help to stir up continuous discussion among workers in education, and to focus continual attention on the importance of the psychological bases of education and the need for a well-discussed philosophy of education.

CLARICE MACNAMARRA,  
Federal Representative

## BELGIUM FLEMISH SECTION

We are glad to be able to say that, thanks to the activities of recent years, a great interest has arisen in our country in the renewal of instruction and education. The fact that ten members put themselves down for the International Conference at Askov as soon as they were told it was to take place is perhaps a symptom of this interest.

We are making a couple of pedagogical films and we continue to co-operate with the Dutch Section in the publication of *Vernieuwing*; the number of subscribers to this magazine has increased.

All the same, the financial difficulties of the Flemish Section have made it impossible for us to develop several activities which we still consider would be very useful if we could go ahead with them. For example, we have had to stop our week-end meetings for discussing the techniques of the New Education.

MARIA WENS,  
General Secretary

FRENCH-SPEAKING SECTION  
September-December 1952: Re-organiza-

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tion of the office; meeting of the Executive Committee; the continuation of our series of discussions on creative activities of the child and of the adolescent: October—M. R. Vandeveld on *Art in Adolescence*; November—Dr. Beernaert on *The Factor of Emotional Balance in Creative Activities*.

January-May 1953:

### I. General organization and international relations (M. Biscompte).

(i) *Study-groups*—Educational Relationships between Pupils and between Teachers—National and International.

(a) Three-day conferences (Brussels, Liège and Mons).

(b) Performances by two kinds of teachers: La Chanterie de Bruxelles and Les Comédiens Normaliens<sup>1</sup> (Brussels, Liège and Mons).

(c) Five study-group meetings on: Group-work in pre-school, primary school, junior secondary school, technical school and training college (Brussels).

(ii) *Publications*—a French translation of the New Education Fellowship Diary (this appeared in March instead of, as had been hoped, at the end of 1952 owing to publication difficulties).

(iii) *Preparations for the Askov Conference*.

(a) Negotiations with 'Voyages Scolaires Belgo-Luxembourgeois' with a view to arranging

- group travel for the Flemish- and French-speaking Sections.
- (b) Translation and circulation of the Conference programme.
- (c) Consideration of the subjects on the Agenda of the meeting of Section Representatives (Copenhagen) and of the International Council Meeting (Askov), including a study of the documentation.
- (d) Regular communication with the Guiding Committee of the N.E.F.
- (e) Communication with the Flemish, Swiss and French Sections of the N.E.F. and contacts with the German Section.
- (f) Communication with the Belgian Ministry of Public Instruction.
- (g) Monthly meetings of the members of the Secretariat.

### II. International Exchanges (Madame Emélie Van Steenhuyse).

(i) *Study of the organization of the Dutch International Plan*.

(ii) Propaganda articles in our monthly publication (*Revue Pédagogique*) and a *Proposal* to collaborate with the twenty-eight National Sections of the N.E.F., with eighteen associations of Belgian teachers, with the Ministry of Public Instruction, with the Centre Internationale Pédagogique at Sèvres, with the International Bureau of Education at Geneva, with the International Centre for Moral Rearmament at Caux, with the American Information Service at Brussels, with the Bureau des Echanges Scolaires et Culturels at Berne, with the South-West Essen County Technical School, etc.

*First Results*—Exchanges of documents and of persons, either promised or actually taking place in association with *La Jeunesse Belge à l'Etranger*.<sup>2</sup>

(a) Ecole de La Gleize (Belgium) with a Dutch school.

(b) Ecole Moyenne de Laeken (Belgium) is looking for exchanges with the United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Holland, India, Ireland, Rhodesia.

(c) Ecole Professionnelle, M. Renard (Belgium) is seeking to exchange work with schools in Switzerland, Denmark, India, Egypt.

(d) Correspondents are wanted by schools in Oslo (Norway), Berne and St. Gall (Switzerland) and Amsterdam.

### III. Book Club (M. R. Devaux).

(i) Publicity in our monthly publication (*Revue Pédagogique*) for the publications of the New Education

<sup>1</sup> See *The New Era*, Vol. 28, No. 3, March 1947, page 57.

<sup>2</sup> See *The New Era*, March 1947, page 66.



Book Club and an assessment of thirty-eight books in French on topics of education and general culture.

(ii) An exhibition of books that have a bearing on the subjects treated in our study-circles and day conferences so that members can see and examine the books which we are recommending to them.

(iii) The compilation of a catalogue of children's books which has been sent to all our members.

#### IV. Editorial (M. Bernard).

Our chronicle has increased from six pages to twelve. Excellent work has been done on it and we are expecting a great deal from the recent introduction of a page of practical didactical material in each number.

#### V. Administration (Mlle. Vuda).

A great deal of work has been done: the collection of material for exhibitions, general archives, office equipment, duplication, the sending out of reviews, membership cards, etc. The excellently-kept files are a strong factor in the efficiency of the office.

#### VI. Finance (M. Frickx).

A certain number of our members have not yet renewed their subscriptions in spite of several reminders. Our open meetings have not really been attended by a sufficiently large number of people (bad weather, too many educational activities in the country which have to share the same potential audience and strike movements among teachers in certain centres in the country). Furthermore, our activities in Liège and Mons are rather costly and as a result of this our finances are in less good trim than they were last year. We are hoping to re-establish our budget through a slight profit which we expect on the sale of the Diary of the New Education Fellowship, 1920-52, and also by obtaining an adequate subsidy from the Ministry of Public Instruction. In any case, the membership fee will have to be raised next year.

H. BISCOMPTE,  
General Secretary

## ENGLAND

It may be of interest to record a change in organization which has become effective during the past few years. Whereas in the 1940's the Executive Committee of the E.N.E.F. was mainly responsible for the affairs of the Section, it is now the Education Committee that gives direction to the Section's work. Both committees are appointed by the annually elected Council, which is the body responsible for the policy and ultimate control of the E.N.E.F. Since education is the main concern of the Fellowship, this may be considered an appropriate and significant change.

Much of the activity of the Section during the past eighteen months has already been referred to in *The New Era*. The February number contained the Secretary's Report for 1952. The Section's concern with standards in education is reflected in the May and July numbers. Energies have also been directed towards publicising the Askov Conference—and it is pleasant to know that about sixty members from England will be attending it—and towards an autumn conference in the south-west on the education of attitudes, and a Christmas conference on *The Development of Loyalties*.

The work of the newly-formed Home and School Committee has been strongly supported by the Education Committee, and in this field progress has been made in attracting affiliations from a number of Parent-Teacher Associations, a new panel of speakers has been formed, and the Committee is now able to advise on films suitable for showing at P.T.A. meetings. It has also been decided to send a Newsletter once a term to affiliated P.T.A's. This will give, in addition to news of what the Fellowship is doing to foster parent-teacher co-operation, the background material in simple form appropriate to an informed discussion of some of the controversial educational topics of the moment. The topic chosen for the first issue is difficulties in reading and arithmetic. Mr. James Hemming is to write the background note.

The Section's interest in the international work of the Fellowship has been well maintained, as witnessed by the participation of English members in European conferences, and the Secretary's lecture tour in Germany early this year.

J. B. ANNAND,  
Secretary

## GERMANY

The German Section has at present 380 individual members, about 65 per cent. of them being teachers in various types of school. The other 35 per cent. includes parents, kindergarten teachers, youth leaders, psychologists, instructors, professors and school administrators. Furthermore, there are 13 institutions and organizations which are corporately associated with the German Section. In this group special attention must be given to the *Arbeitskreis Neue Erziehung* in Berlin, which has 500 members and acts as a parent-teacher organization, making important contributions to the education of adolescents. Thus, a total of nearly 1,000 persons are involved in the activity of the German Section.

Approximately 12 members of the German Section are leading persons in

official or administrative positions. In this way it is possible to keep the governments of the German Länder in touch with the activities of the N.E.F.

During the past year the German Section has been able to make remarkable progress. The Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Munich, Stuttgart, Treysa, Weilburg and Wiesbaden groups, which were founded in 1951, have now consolidated their organization and proceeded to the solution of practical problems. At Dortmund and Jugenheim new groups have been organized.

The culmination of the Section's activity was the Summer Conference at Weilburg (August 10th-19th, 1952). The subject of the Conference, *Mit-menschliche Erziehung* (Human Relations in Education) has become the common topic for group activity all over the Section.

The Stuttgart group organized in October 1952 a regional conference which attracted many participants.

The German version of the N.E.F. Diary was printed in 5,000 copies. It makes it possible to give publicity to the activities of the N.E.F. and to engage new members.

Between members of the German Section and those of other Sections an increasing exchange of ideas has been established and this is strengthened by lecture trips and participation in N.E.F. conferences in other countries.

BRUNO W. KARLSSON,  
Secretary

## HOLLAND

The membership of the Section is about 600 and falls into the following groups: Educational Organizations, 5; Schools, 50; University Professors, 3; Teachers in Secondary Modern and Grammar Schools, 175; Teachers in Junior Schools, 175; Teachers in Schools of Domestic Science, 25; Teachers in Infant Schools, 75; Non-professional members (parents, etc.), 92.

The Section is divided into the following working-groups:

(1) *Work-group 'International Plan'* has tried since June 1951 to promote international understanding through an exchange of all kinds of school-work (drawings, paintings, essays). Concluding that through this and similar exchange schemes international understanding and international-mindedness is strengthened in schools that are already 'internationally-minded' rather than awakened in the ordinary ones, the secretary of the work-group developed a quite new feature: To awaken international-mindedness even in the most ordinary schools the work-group will publish selected lists of



didactic materials giving information on children's life in other countries. The lists will contain the following items:

- (a) recommended fiction (for children only);
- (b) recommended non-fiction (for children or teachers or both);
- (c) recommended audio-visual aids;
- (d) collections in ethnological museums;
- (e) out-of-date fiction and non-fiction.

They are being composed in collaboration with children's libraries, museums, etc. Lists on life in Indonesia and Eskimo-life are being prepared and are to be published early in September. A small pilot-project about children's life in Africa is being carried on from May until the beginning of the summer holidays by three infant teachers.

The aim of the new feature is that contact between children and consequently an exchange of work should be strengthened through a better knowledge of children's life elsewhere, based on items (a) to (d) above.

(2) *Parent-Education*. No report.

(3) *Art-Education* (membership 1951, 120; 1953, 160).

This group organizes in close co-operation with the Art Centre 'Werkschuit' in Amsterdam:

- (a) Art classes for children and adults;
- (b) Lectures by experts in Art education and psychologists;
- (c) Meetings with a thoroughly practical character;
- (d) Exhibitions of children's Art work.

The third impression of the Guide to the Exhibition organized in December 1951 has just appeared. Another exhibition is to be held in the Municipal Museum for Modern Art in Amsterdam December 1953.

The 100th issue of the Section's magazine *Vernieuwing* appeared under the responsibility of this work-group.

In carrying out a project on *Man and his Work* the group tried to investigate: (a) the ability of adolescents to express themselves through visual art; (b) to what extent art education already forms an integrating part of Infant and Junior Education.

From September onwards the group will publish a Bulletin of its own in co-operation with the Art Centre 'Werkschuit'.

(4) *Education in Infant Schools* (membership 1951, 54; 1953, 79—39 of them members of the Dutch Section<sup>2</sup>).

1951-52—Lectures on Linking the Infant and Junior School; Play-

therapy; Expression work in the Infant School.

1952-53—Lectures on School Meals; the Making of Musical Instruments; Creative Dramatics.

Course in Creative Dramatics for Infant school teachers.

The group publishes a Bulletin of its own.

(5) *Secondary School Problems in General* (no individual members—exclusively school members. 1951, 21 schools; 1953, 28 schools).

1952—Discussion meetings based on the Minister's Memorandum on Experiments in progressive schools. Result—time-table for a first form was drawn up and sent to the Minister of Education.

1953—Discussion meetings based on a number of experiments in Dutch Secondary schools.

Findings of the meetings are being published in all professional journals.

(6) *Modern Languages*. No report. Owing to the illness of the secretary the work of this group stagnated seriously. In 1952 the central theme was: What do Secondary school (and Grammar school) pupils read? An enquiry for both lower and higher forms was planned. The work should have been carried on in co-operation with Group 2 and with Children's Libraries.

(7) *Mathematics* (membership 1951, 90; 1953, 122).

Working programme—Curriculum in Mathematics for H.B.S. (between Secondary Modern and Grammar school—curriculum with a scientific bias) and Grammar schools. Also the first teaching of Mathematics in Secondary schools.

The work-group organized, in co-operation with groups (5), (6) and (8) two weekends during this period:

(a) *Autumn 1951 on special Secondary school problems*.

Lectures:

Kees Boeke—Rôle of the children in the school organization.

W. H. Brouwer—Selection problems.

Elisabeth Rotten, W. de Coster—Teacher-education.

(b) *Autumn 1952 on the teaching of Science in Secondary schools*.

Lectures:

Mathematics—Mrs. Ehrenfest, Leiden.

Astronomy—Professor Dr. M. Minnaert, Utrecht University.

General Science—Dr. J. Koning, Principal of Montessori-Lyzeum, The Hague.

Mechanics—Professor Dr. H. Freudenthal, Utrecht University.

Summary:

Mrs. Ehrenfest: Geometry is the study of spatial properties of Nature.

Spatial intuition and activity are, whatever the student's age, essential if the study of geometry is to be made interesting and alluring.

Professor Minnaert: Astronomy is of inestimable value for the mental development of Secondary school students. Secondary school curricula have not kept abreast with the development of Astronomy and must be changed in such a way that at least as much (if not twice as much) time is given to astrophysics and the structure of the universe as to spherical astronomy and the solar system.

Dr. J. Koning: General Science should be taught in the lower forms of all kinds of Dutch Secondary schools without any exception.

Professor Freudenthal: Mechanics—it is wrong to teach mechanics according to the deductive method. The choice of topics to be taught in mechanics should not be dependent on the tools offered by school mathematics but on what is physically important and didactically possible.

At the end of the Easter Conference of the W.V.O. in April 1953 the group organized, in close co-operation with the Physics Group, a weekend conference where Dr. W. Wagenschein (Vice-Principal of one of the four experimental Secondary schools in Hessen, Germany) lectured on *Spontaneity in the teaching and learning of Mathematics and Physics*. During this weekend Dr. Wagenschein gave a demonstration lesson with Dutch pupils aged 14-18 from schools which are members of Group 5. The Mathematics and Physics groups together organized, with other organizations, a meeting of Teachers of Mathematics and Physics, where Dr. Wagenschein also lectured.

The 103rd issue of *Vernieuwing* appeared under the responsibility of this work-group. It is the eldest of the active groups of the W.V.O. Since December 1952 it has had a Bulletin of its own.

(8) *Physics* (not set up until December 1950. The group numbered 50 members at the end of 1951; 70 at the end of 1952).

Close co-operation with other professional organizations of teachers in Science and W.V.O.—groups (5) and (7).

In the course of 1951 ten meetings were organized; main theme—pupils' practical work in Physics in progressive and ordinary schools.

From January 1952 to April 1953, eight meetings and one weekend (see report of group (7)) were held; main theme—Curriculum in Physics for fifth and sixth forms. The most important lecture was given by Mr.

<sup>1</sup> See *The New Era*, December 1950: '... And Here in Holland we Built a Ship'.

<sup>2</sup> Members of groups are not always members of the Section.



A. J. S. van Dam, General Inspector for Grammar Schools, suggesting the modification of the matriculation-programme in such a way that Atomphysics should be a part of matriculation papers in future. Dr. J. A. Smit, Lecturer in Physics at Utrecht University, gave two lectures on what items of Atomphysics should be taught in fifth and sixth forms. Under the leadership of Mr. van Dam, members of this group and other science teachers visited English Secondary schools in July 1952.

Publication in *Vernieuwing*<sup>1</sup> and all professional journals.

As Dr. W. Wagenschein (see report of group (7)) lectured about the *Curriculum of Mathematics and Physics in Fifth and Sixth Forms* and on *How to Teach what should be Taught*, his visit to the Section was of most interest to this group.

*The Work-group for Art Education*, residing in the Art Centre 'Werkschuit' in Amsterdam, works closely with the 'Co-operation Printing-Press in Schools'. It numbers about 100 members, 80 of which are printing schools. The character of the Co-operation is mainly an international one. It works entirely in line with 'Co-opération de l'Education laïque' (C. Freinet) whose conferences are frequented by Dutch printers. It publishes a Bulletin of its own, *Contact*, in collaboration with Volksopvoeding, the Group of Flemish printers.

Activities organized by the Central Work-group of the W.V.O.:

(1) July 22nd to 26th, 1952—Summer Conference. Theme: *Education in the Service of Peace*. Lectures by the Chairman, Kees Boeke. The meaning of the theme was outlined by experts in Infant, Junior and Senior education. There was a lecture on how to practise it in art-education, Youth movement and home life.

(2) November 22nd, 1952—Lecture by Dr. Elisabeth Rotten—Humanity, Aims and Problems of Mankind.

(3) To prepare for the N.E.F. Conference in Askov, 1953, an Easter Conference was held from April 8th to 10th. Theme: Spontaneity and Creativity as factors in child-education. Chairman—Dr. J. Koning, Principal of Montessori-Lyceum, The Hague. *Lectures*: Introductory talk—*Spontaneity and Creativity* by Miss W. Bladergroen (Lecturer in Child-Education, Groningen University). *Conclusions*: Child development means a continuous stream of spontaneous creativity (the

results of which are new for the child but need not be so for the community) and imitation. Educationists should be aware of this. The child should be given, however, the opportunity to choose from a rich environment. Every kind of Art-education should be geared to the child's mental and emotional level.

J. H. Ringrose: *Spontaneity and Intellectual Education. Conclusions*: Loneliness main characteristic of modern man. Intellectual education, offering problems which arouse the child's interest, aims at bridging the gap between the child—lonely in its own way—and the world it has to live in.

Dr. M. Wagenschein: *Creative Intelligence. Conclusions*: Learning to work is more than fact-finding. We have to face a suffocation of intelligence not only in German but in all Western European schools. We have to face and solve it like good Europeans. 'Activity', a fully worn-out word (bustle, liveliness) needs two additional epithets: *Eindringlichkeit* and *Inständigkeit*, in order to enable it to be used on the same level as *spontaneity* and *creativity*. Dr. Wagenschein dealt extensively with these expressions, which are essential conditions for creative intelligence, in—the lesson, the enrichment of language through science-teaching, the teaching period as a whole, and the relationship between school subjects.

Dr. N. A. Bruining: *Moral Education. Conclusions*: Everybody should try to achieve fully what is potentially within him. We should try to become ourselves and help the child to find its own destiny.

The lectures are published extensively in the 104th issue of *Vernieuwing*, except those given by Miss W. Dol (Social Education) and Mr. B. Veldhuis (Printing-Press).

A summary of the Conference was given by Professor Dr. A. D. de Groot, Psychologist at Amsterdam University.

Although the work in the work-groups is nearly always stimulated by a single person, I have not mentioned their names because Section work should be considered as one indivisible whole. I wish to make one exception, however, and mention the name of the Editorial Secretary of *Vernieuwing*, Mrs. M. M. Smit-Miessen. She is a secretary of one of the work-groups herself and is consequently burdened with a lot of group organization, but since September 1951 she has given nearly all her spare time to the magazine in order to make it, as regards contents and appearance, one of the most important educational magazines of our country.

In spite of the many genuine activities reported above and lively and

enthusiastic as the work-groups are, I am not sure that they constitute a well-integrated Section of the N.E.F. We are tending to find that the more active the work-groups, the more they tend to work independently of the Section. I even foresee the possibility of each work-group developing into a progressive organization, actively concerned in working out didactic problems and improving school techniques, and yet losing sight of many important aspects of the N.E.F.'s activities and ways of thinking. An example of this may be seen in the fact that we published the whole of the Mental Health Agenda and the material prepared for the Unesco Conference on Mental Health and published in *The New Era* in December 1952, but I have had a very small number of reactions to this programme, in spite of my own strong feeling that the ideas contained in it are really more important for the well-being of children in school than any possible reform of teaching methods, however valuable. The work-groups are, I think, significant of the high importance that some Dutch teachers place on modernizing curricula and teaching methods. Very little help is given them in these matters during teacher-training and it is noteworthy that they are willing to spend their leisure time in threshing out their problems for themselves in work-groups. I feel this lack of scientific teacher-training must be a brake on the New Education in many National Sections, and I should like to suggest a special number of *The New Era* to deal with the correlation between teacher-training and effective advance in the New Education.

S. FREUDENTHAL-LUTTER,  
International Correspondent,  
Holland

## INDIA

### NEW DELHI

The Child Guidance Council and the Child Guidance Clinic here have been arranging a series of lectures for the benefit of parents and teachers on the question of child-training. Our members have been invited by the local schools to give talks to the teachers of different institutions on such subjects as Difficult Children; Why Children Misbehave; Stealing; Truancy; Intelligence Testing. Formerly we arranged these lectures in public places such as Y.M.C.A., but the new procedure of organizing lectures in the schools is being appreciated very much, so much so that the schools are beginning to ask for our help.

These lectures and the discussions that follow are opening eyes to the

<sup>1</sup> *Vernieuwing*, the official organ of the Section, is published by Nederlandse Daltonvereniging, Nederlandse Montessorivereniging, Vereniging voor Vernieuwing van Opvoeding en Onderwijs (Flanders), Volksopvoeding, Werkgemeenschap voor Vernieuwing van Opvoeding en Onderwijs (Nederland).



question of backward and problem children found in each school, so much so that the Educational Authorities, like the Director of Education, are taking an interest in the problems which have come to the surface. They are already alive to the necessity for taking some steps in the near future for helping such children.

The Child Guidance Clinic is receiving a larger number of visitors, so we are giving suggestions and advice to many more parents than the number of problem children attending the Clinic for treatment. We are also glad to say that the newly-formed Psychological Association with Professor Humayun Kabir as its President, is giving a good lead to the public in the discussion of educational problems in the light of new psychology and psycho-analysis.

U. S. GHEBA,  
Secretary

### BOMBAY

The New Education Fellowship's Bombay Section has 108 members on its roll, many of them eminent educationists, teachers and others interested in education.

The relation of our organization with the National Commission of Unesco in India is very cordial. The Secretary of our organization was asked to become a member of the Commission. The New Education Fellowship was invited to attend as an observer the Seminar of the Gandhian Technique for World Peace, held in Delhi. Further, the Government of India allowed me to attend the Unesco Regional Conference on Free and Compulsory Education in South Asia and the Pacific which was held in Bombay from December 12th to 23rd, 1952.

Our activities this year have been numerous and very successful and we have been sending regular reports of these to our London Headquarters. The most recent activity was that of organizing a symposium on *Education in America*, which was held on Friday, April 17th, 1953. Teachers who had been to U.S.A. under the Fulbright Exchange of Teachers Scheme spoke about their experiences in the field of education in U.S.A. We are glad to report that it was well attended.

K. C. VYAS,  
Joint Secretary

### JOHANNESBURG

The Johannesburg Group of the New Education Fellowship was founded after an International Conference of the N.E.F. in South Africa in 1934. At present it has a membership of approximately one hundred, composed

of teachers, lecturers at the Johannesburg Teachers' Training College, parents and people interested in education.

The activities of the Group have largely been in the direction of holding general meetings and conducting courses for teachers and others on educational subjects. Until recently we received financial support from the Transvaal Education Department in connection with the courses we held, but latterly, as a result of a new directive from the Department, activities must be arranged through a Training College if they are to receive any official support, financial or otherwise. Fortunately our relations with the Johannesburg Teachers' Training College are good, and we have had ready co-operation from them. Latterly, in addition, we have arranged lecture tours for outstanding overseas educationists or visitors, but here again we have received no financial support from the Transvaal, although we have enjoyed the co-operation of the Inspectorate. We have no relations with the National Commission for Unesco, which is not particularly active in this country.

Our activities over the past year have been:

1. The organizing of an exhibition, coupled with lectures, film shows and demonstrations, to bring home to the public the significance of education, and to underline some of the important issues.
2. A lecture tour by James Hemming.
3. A lecture tour by Sir Eugen Millington-Drake.
4. A symposium on *What type of school would you choose for your child.*

It has become clear that in this country there is a vast potential reserve of people who would be interested in the work of the N.E.F. The problem arises, how to mobilize this potential. People here do not seem Association-conscious and it has always been hard to build up a membership. (This is not peculiar to the N.E.F.). We do, however, get general support for any venture which has a direct value to the people interested in the particular project, although there is still the difficulty of getting them to join afterwards and of continuing with the work.

If the N.E.F. is to be built up in South Africa, it appears that the course to follow is to aim at a national or international conference. Such a conference is long overdue here. It is necessary to give impetus to the aim of the Fellowship—the exchange and practice of ideas in education that advance a world civilization.

The soil for such a Conference must be carefully prepared—interest aroused

and points of contact developed. This is best done, we feel, by individual lecture tours by prominent N.E.F. men. The value of James Hemming's visit here is immeasurable—a new group has been formed with the possibility of others, and a number of enthusiastic people have been drawn into the movement. This new interest must be maintained and developed, which, we feel, can only be done on the lines indicated, and must be done quickly.

D. M. LUCKIN,  
Secretary

### NEW ZEALAND

During the year five of the branches of the New Zealand Section have been very active, Dunedin, Nelson, Wellington, Feilding and Auckland. In most places regular monthly meetings have been held to discuss educational problems, and overseas educationists have on several occasions been welcome speakers at these meetings.

Some of the branches have provided speakers to lead discussions on education at meetings of various other organizations and groups interested in recent developments in educational practice in New Zealand.

Although the branches have been active, however, the central Section organization has not been so, and it is several years since a full conference of branches has been held.

G. W. PARKYN,  
Interim Secretary

### NORTHERN IRELAND

The programme for the session just ended included a series of meetings at which the central theme was 'What is happening in the Schools?' It was felt that all those in the community interested in the improvement of the quality of education would welcome the opportunity of taking part in a frank discussion of problems of concern to the teacher at present.

After an introductory meeting, three further meetings were held, at each of which an aspect of the main theme was discussed. These aspects were respectively: 'Is there discipline in the schools?'; 'Is there too much arithmetic in the schools?'; and 'Do our children read?' A number of speakers drawn from both the educational and business worlds were invited to open each meeting by stating their opinions briefly. The views expressed, often conflicting, helped to provoke a lively discussion. The success of the programme was shown by the large attendance at each meeting and by the



greatly increased number of subscriptions.

The Section's Commission on School Record Cards hopes in the near future to have printed, for experimental purposes, copies of the card they have prepared. Another Commission, on Handicapped Children, was invited to submit to the Advisory Council evidence covering all aspects of the problem of providing for such children.

At the Annual General Meeting, an interesting and challenging talk on 'International Understanding through the Schools' was given by Miss E. H. Maxwell, B.A., Headmistress of Richmond Lodge School. It is hoped to pursue this theme during the next session.

The Committee have decided to send the Chairman as their representative at Denmark this summer.

D. F. McNEILL,  
Secretary

## NORWAY

The principal work done by our Section in the last two years has been in organizing lectures and discussions on the following topics:

*The Free and the Unfree Child:* A. S. Neill.

Three lectures on Freedom in Education and misconceptions about Freedom in Education:

1. *Home Education:* Dr. Med. Alex Brinchmann.
2. *Discipline in School:* School Inspector Dr. B. Ribsskog.
3. *My Children and other people's School Psychologist,* Magister Borger Haavardsholm.

*Homework done in School:* Rektor Ullmann.

*In what respects should children regard us, grown-up people, as authorities?* Ester Hermanson.

*Human Relations in School in England:* J. B. Annand, International Secretary, N.E.F.

*What do we think of schools to-day?* Discussion introduced by a mother of small children (Mrs. Drage), a mother of children in secondary schools (Mrs. Gedde-Dahl) and a mother and teacher (Mrs. Riise).

Meeting organized in co-operation with the Norwegian Association for the United Nations:

- (a) Girls from a 6th grade gave a performance: *Human Rights in under-developed countries.*
- (b) Discussion concerning *Education and International Understanding*, introduced by Rektor Haakon Holmboe and Mr. Gunnar Jenshus, Headmaster of a Folkskole.

Meeting organized by the Oslo Association for Mental Hygiene, the

Norwegian Association of Nursery School Teachers, the Norwegian Association for Child Psychiatry and Child Guidance and the Norwegian Section of the N.E.F. At this meeting the Norwegian Section of the International Organization for the Education of Pre-School Children was founded. School Inspector Mrs. Anne Marie Norvig (Copenhagen) gave a lecture: *Our Relations with Children*, and Magister Cato Hambro, Secretary of the Oslo Association for Mental Hygiene, gave one on *Why don't we understand young people?*

RUTH FROYLAND NIELSEN,  
Secretary

## PAKISTAN

The New Education Fellowship was started in Pakistan by Professor B. A. Hashmi on the establishment of Pakistan in August 1947. The activities of the N.E.F. are being organized every year regularly. Two conferences were held, one in January 1949 and the other in January 1953. The lectures and discussions deal with progressive educational ideas, and distinguished foreign educationists, mostly from American and European countries, are invited to address the meetings.

An Education Conference was held in January 1953 in the Central Training College, Lahore. The American educationists who were serving Pakistan institution for one year under Fulbright scheme took part in discussions on educational problems in Pakistan with the educationists of Pakistan. The N.E.F. arranged a tea party for the participants of the conference.

A 'Case History Project' was carried out in May 1952, and again in May 1953, in which about 150 teachers investigated case histories of about 1,000 children who had shown marked success or failure in the school environment. This project was personally supervised by Professor B. A. Hashmi.

It has been established by the 'Case History Project' that the personal contact of the teacher and the taught is a great educative factor and the class teaching should be modified in such a way that the teachers help the individual child in his particular difficulties. The membership of the N.E.F. is 200.

Special efforts are essential to create interest among the teachers so that they may realize the value of progressive educational ideas. Most teachers, educational administrators and parents do not yet fully realize that it is their duty to be active members of the N.E.F.

ANISUDDIN ANSARI,  
Secretary 'Ahsan'

## SCOTLAND

There are in the Scottish Section seven branches with a total of some 486 members, exclusive of Glasgow where the N.E.F. is amalgamated with the Child Guidance and Parent-Teacher Association. Membership of the Branches ranges from 32 to 151. The members in the non-University towns are almost exclusively teachers, mostly women. In the University towns there is a certain admixture of University staff. In Aberdeen the membership is probably more mixed than elsewhere, with a small but noticeable number of non-teacher parents.

During the year there have been contacts with Germany, South Africa and the U.S.A. The documents from Germany were most interesting in that they showed a strong spirit in education which sought to ensure respect for the individual by the State.

All the branches have cordial relations with local Education Committees. The Aberdeen Branch is given all the space it requires in the Weekly Circular Letter to all schools, and accommodation is granted free of charge for all meetings, with facilities for making tea. Several members of the Education Committee are members, and attend meetings frequently. In Fife the Education Committee pays for the tea which is given annually by the N.E.F. Branch there for all Probationer Teachers. There is very little direct contact with the Scottish Education Department, though a few Inspectors are members of their local N.E.F. Branch.

All Branches had successful sessions in 1952. The Fife, Dundee and Perth Branches have instituted what looks like becoming an annual event—a joint meeting of the three Branches, held in Perth. The Fife Branch also show much enterprise in holding their meetings not only in Kirkcaldy but also in Leven and Dunfermline once a session. This does much to keep in touch with members in the more outlying districts of Fife. Every summer this Branch organizes a bus tour to different types of school; this year they are to visit certain schools in the Border Country. In Glasgow much publicity was obtained by the recording, anonymously, of the views of four girls and four boys on parents. Aberdeen, isolated as it is, has to send long distances for speakers to bring something new to the city. This means heavy expenditure, but meetings addressed by Professor Pilley, Mr. David Jordan and Dr. W. Boyd were well worth it. Attendance at meetings is high and discussion is often keen.

All the Branches, except Glasgow which is in a class by itself, find



difficulty in attracting parents and young teachers. Fife has, as described above, an annual tea to all Probationer Teachers, but it would seem that, while a number of these pay subscriptions, few are regular attenders at meetings. Edinburgh complains of passivity of the body of members. They attend for a talk, a cup of tea and a discussion, but there the matter ends. This doubtless applies to all Branches and the real difficulty remains to get our ideas put into practice in more and more classrooms. Change comes slowly but, on the other hand, there is change, and the financial position of the Section remains satisfactory.

W. CHRISTIE

*International Secretary*

## SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Section, founded at Locarno in 1927, now consists of some 200 members. These are chiefly teachers, but include psychologists, doctors and ministers of religion both Protestant and Roman Catholic. There are also group members such as Teachers' Associations, Training Colleges and School Inspectorates. The Section was reorganized in 1951 and a completely new Guiding Committee chosen.

At the annual meeting at Solothurn

in 1951, Mr. Jean-Richard of Zurich led a discussion on Children's Drawings, and Mr. Ramseyer of Neuenberg, Director of Secondary Schools, outlined the problem of the teaching of mathematics. It was then decided to undertake two projects—an international Seminar on the teaching of elementary mathematics and a study-week on Children's Drawings.

In the Spring of 1952 the above-mentioned Seminar on Mathematics took place, with Mr. Hardi Fischer, the President of the Section, as organizer. It was attended by many N.E.F. and other delegates from Switzerland and abroad and attracted much attention in the daily press as well as in technical journals. The discussions begun then are being continued in the Spring of 1953. The Conference was patronized and financially supported by the Bureau International d'Education and the National Swiss Commission of Unesco.

In the Autumn of 1952 Mr. Jean-Richard organized in Zurich the international week on the study of the Psychology of Children's Drawings. From the beginning this was intended as a forum for discussion open to the general public, and not as a conference of specialists. Whereas in Geneva there were about 50 full-time participants, in Zurich the daily attendance varied between 150 and 250. Both in

Zurich and in Geneva the authorities gave their blessing to the meetings and provided an official welcome. The daily press and technical magazines also gave good publicity to the Zurich conference.

At the Annual General Meeting in Berne in 1952, the second stage of the reorganization began. Encouraged by the success of these two projects, a further conference was planned on 'School and State' (Organizer: Dr. Richard Grob), and the wish was expressed that the Swiss Section should concentrate more on Swiss educational problems. Professor Dr. Richard Meili of Berne gave a public lecture on educational psychology and the connection between intelligence and performance.

The Swiss Section is now seeking to become directly represented in the National Swiss Commission of Unesco. In addition, contacts have been made with other educational bodies in Switzerland, some of which have since become group members. Thereby a closer bond is being forged between the different cultural centres of our federal community, and teachers, parents, doctors, psychologists, ministers of religion and social workers are beginning to be brought together to study the principles of the New Education.

HARDI FISCHER,

*Chairman*

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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## SOME MODERN ATTITUDES TO THE TEACHING OF READING

*M. Brooke Gwynne, Department of Child Development, University of London Institute of Education.*

'The interplay between our linguistic education and our understanding of people deserves much more study.'

*Professor P. E. Vernon*

THERE are certain criticisms of modern educational theory current at the present time that cannot be ignored; some from small voices, detracting and uninformed, others with more weight, calling for a revaluation of commonly accepted principles such as interest, activity, play methods as aids to learning. Much of this censure, whether it be justified or not, could be applied to the teaching of reading in primary schools and it is salutary to take note of it and to be prepared to meet it.

There is always a danger of accepting a ready-made theory without sufficient investigation and a greater danger when a system is applied without an understanding of the principles. This does sometimes happen when harassed teachers adopt a method—because it is up to date or because it is commended by authority—without having the time or inclination to look into its implications. Here the carpers and critics have sometimes ground for complaint. It is the purpose of this article to examine some of the ways used, or adapted for use, in teaching reading at the present time and to show that they are based on sound theory, theory which has evolved from much investigation, study and research.

It is interesting to glance at an old-fashioned primer, reprinted in this century but going back to early in the last, called, ominously, *Reading Without Tears*. The preface is sanguine: 'Great pains have been taken to render this book pleasing to children. To allow them to tread the path of knowledge, steps have been cut in the steep rock and flowers have been planted by the wayside. Pictures are these flowers, careful arrangement and exact classification are these

steps. These efforts are not made that children may learn to read at an earlier age than at present, but that they may learn to read without TEARS . . . Tears need not be shed by little creatures, ignorant and playful though they may be, while learning to read.' There follows an illustrated alphabet, A for apple, N for nut, and then a set of two-letter syllables, leading up to sentences such as 'Pug is in his tub. Rub Pug on his rug.' In spite of the flowers and the paths, one wonders whether the little creatures, somehow discredited for being playful and ignorant, found the effort rewarding enough to avoid tearful episodes. But, beyond our pity and amusement, there is some value to-day in examining the ideas that inspired the book. It saw the magnitude of the task of learning to read, a task as arduous to-day: the recognition and naming of symbols, the association of these symbols with sound, the combination of these sounds into syllables and words, with anomalies of spelling that, in the English language, defy system; and, as a final process, welding these words into a sentence that shall have meaning. The book also recognizes the value of pictures as a means of association between things and the words that stand for them, not of course in itself a new device. Though no one could call the reading matter stimulating, it does attempt, within a limited and unreal vocabulary, to provide a series of sentences with some sense-sequence, so that a child might consider himself as taking part in the act of reading, though the purpose would have seemed obscure. One imagines how, once the lesson had been completed, hacked out step by step, the child, released as arrow from bow, sped away on some really important piece of work, like play. Neither he nor his teacher expected anything else. He must have come to learn with reluctance; come to play with eagerness and the full powers of energy;



a contrast that has important relevance in educational ideas to-day. Then there is the matter of system. The system on which the book is planned regards the business of learning in a rational light; breaking down the problem into parts and then tackling the parts one at a time. Herein lies one of the biggest differences in attack between ancient and modern.

Psychological studies, linguistic studies, copious investigation and experimental research in the past half-century have brought us to a much better understanding of children, of the learning process and the nature of the many language activities connected with reading. The results of such studies, among many other branches of pedagogic research, have led to an approach to reading which is in greatest contrast to former methods. The so-called sentence, or visual-recognition, method starts with the presentation of a whole sentence, gradually breaking it down into words and letters; an analytic instead of a synthetic approach. This method is now used or adapted in a number of primary schools. It may sound horrific to those who believe that the method of line-upon-line, precept-upon-precept is inevitably the way to set about any undertaking of whatever nature. It is, however, a normal and natural way that accords with the process of learning that is instinctively adopted by children in other fields of experience. It is, for instance, the whole pattern not the detail that first impresses, and it is that which has the immediate interest and importance that attracts and holds attention. But it is on the basis of close association with speech that the sentence, or visual-recognition, method is to be most strongly recommended. As soon as a young child learns to use language at all effectively, the spoken word is used in the form of sentences, phrases, whole combinations of words; not in the form of isolated syllables or phonic acrobatics. Any interference with fluency readiness and ease in established linguistic habits is surely a retrograde step. It is true that the printed word is used for different purposes from the spoken word, and in a more formal and deliberate way. Speech, being spontaneous utterance, springing out of all we do, think, want, achieve, is so close, so inextricably tied up with action, feeling, desire that it is indeed part of them and thereby, in a sense, part of us: the written word, less spontaneous, more selective, is yet speech—but recorded speech.

The relationship between speech and reading, then, is, in the natural order of things, indivisible and organic, and it is the preservation of this relationship that is regarded as basic in learning to read to-day. Speech is taught and learned, ideally, in the home. It may have to be established in school if home circumstances have not been favourable. In homes where rich and varied speech is freely heard and used, it is not uncommon for a child to learn to read independently without being formally taught, linking symbols with already familiar speech, recognizing, for instance, the pattern, not the words, of sentences on hoardings, notices, titles of books, names of streets, and so on. The presence of books and all that books mean is also a help. Books hold stories and contact with books is a manifestation of the potency of the printed word to record and revive experience. To such children learning to read follows naturally on learning to speak; the technique is often absorbed almost unconsciously and it is of little moment what method is followed. The only dangerous thing to do with a child who can teach himself is to hold him back. The diet he needs is plentiful material, not so difficult as to discourage, not so easy as to excuse him from effort which is the stepping stone to progress.

It is the others with whom we are concerned when assessing different approaches to teaching reading, with those whose speech is often limited and impoverished, their powers of expression lying dormant because of lack of stimulus and lack of opportunity to listen and copy. It is 'because of this kind of 'malnutrition', as far as language is concerned, that so much importance is attached to the pre-reading stage of abundant play. Toys, games, stories, songs, what is called 'free-play' is good and necessary on its own account, but to the little newcomer, whose language facility is small, it is also the first step in learning to read. The play room is full of inducements to talk, to listen, to copy, to assimilate new language patterns and new vocabulary. How indulgent, how falsely spoiling a scene in a modern infant school might seem to the author of *Reading Without Tears*, thinking of 'playfulness' as something to be curbed, not as the source out of which learning grows. Similarly, when reading lessons begin, how slipshod, how irresponsible might seem the method we now use. To face a beginner with the sentence as the unit instead of the letter or the syllable would have suggested guesswork



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**BASIL BLACKWELL · OXFORD**

and a sad lack of thoroughness. Nevertheless, that is what is happening, with assurance and intent, in many infant classrooms to-day. Simple sentences, which are associated so clearly with pictures that their content is unmistakable, are presented, recognized, and gradually differentiated. The sentences may be taken from story, rhyme or statement. 'It is raining to-day', symbolized by an open umbrella, for a weather chart, or a child's own words may provide the sentence. When the picture is taken away the visual pattern of the sentences are differentiated by their shape and size, and this course is followed till many patterns are known. Eventually, by the same analytic process, individual words (which have been carefully selected so as to recur continuously) are recognized, and then, later on, the letters themselves. The breaking down process is now complete and it may take longer or shorter time in accordance with the speed of learning in particular children. This does not mean, obviously, that the child can now, in the fullest sense, read. He can make out what his own reading book, with its familiar vocabulary, is saying; first with the help of copious pictures,

their referential use diminishing as the book becomes harder. But at some time his vocabulary will have to be widened: new words will have to be tackled. At this stage some phonic training is usually given to provide for the splitting up of the unfamiliar word into its component parts. Views on this point vary with the experience of different teachers, some holding that memory and recognition, together with analogy and the hint in the context, will, in the course of full and vigorous reading, build up a reliable vocabulary. Controversy also ranges about the teaching of spelling. If, it is argued, the pattern of the word, in English, is firmly established and aided by teaching reading and writing together and by giving help whenever needed, children are unlikely to make outrageous mistakes; and in any case, with adults it is the knowledge of the visual pattern of the words that generally decides which spelling is correct. The common course seems to be, however, that a certain amount of practice in spelling is usually given. There is a great deal to be said on this subject. The factors that affect spelling are many and diverse and research has not yet given a definite answer to



all the problems. Perhaps it might be stated with some assurance that the right kind of reading environment, quite apart from factors related to social economics, is generally held to be a strong inducement to reliable spelling, just as copious reading is most likely to foster it. Perhaps also there is a less limited view than at one time about the validity of faultless spelling as a measure of well-developed languages abilities.

What, then, it may be asked at this stage, is, in the long run, gained by such methods as have been described, if in the end the old phonic method has to be resorted to? The major gain, in all probability, is that of interest in what is read, because the vocabulary and sentence structure is that of daily life, in contrast with the sharp limitations and strictures of the phonic system. As an experience of reading for meaning, as against juggling with senseless and confusing phonic exercises, it has immense possibilities to impress, to give enjoyment, to satisfy curiosity and to entice the reader to go on to further pleasurable experiences and to lead on, in good time, to more exacting and mature reading matter. Interest, in this sense, is not to be thought of as the carrot for the donkey, not even as the harnessing of energies which otherwise would be expended elsewhere, but as the foundation and source of all that should ripen in the personality as the result of contact with reading and literature; for command of language, sensitive appreciation and understanding of language, have effects of inestimable importance on thought, feeling and judgment.

There is also the fact that the normal movement of the eye in reading favours a straight run in succession when taking in words in print. A rearward movement, in going back to pick up the first syllable in phonic word-building, is contrary to the normal motion of the eye and may therefore become a check to fluency. Certainly the rhythm and cadences of natural speech are more readily preserved where the sentence has always been the unit, in contrast with the tendencies to stuttering and toneless reading where the syllables have to be sounded separately. Good, natural, lively speaking aloud of what is read (and silent reading is nearly always a second, though vital, stage), conduces to a healthy perception and expression of meaning; meaning which is the focus of the whole endeavour.

On the other hand this method has very real

pitfalls. The first stages, using memory and recognition, are usually accompanied by excitement and novelty and it is easy to assume that more has been accomplished than is the case. At first it is an advantage for the child to read, in his small two-sheet reading book, more or less by heart, the sentences that are familiar. He is practising technique in a valuable way and getting into the swing as he reads aloud to himself. Later on when he is ready for a further stage by working on new material he should not only be re-reading what he has already memorized, Each stage has to be carefully supervised and provided for, and the pace of individual children noted. Neglect and carelessness at the breaking-down stage by teachers who are not fully aware of the principles concerned are likely to lead to superficiality and ultimate confusion, and bring discredit on the method. Children who are supposed to be ready to pass a reading test and who fail to do so because they have not been weaned from memory-reading, have not been given a rooted and established training or adequate practice.

No one who realizes the complexity of the process would dare to proclaim that one method suits all children. The possibility of far-reaching effects on the child's linguistic education, if progress is checked, is too great to risk overall treatment or a universal practice. In this connection it is as well to remember the problem of backward readers, the large number of whom has recently so shocked the public. Among the possible causes discussed widely it is probable that insecurity in reading at the earliest stage may well be included. Persistent slowness to grasp the essentials at one stage, while being hurried on to the next, breeds discouragement, frustration and indolence, and helps to produce, in the junior school and later on in senior school, the typical 'poor reader'. It may be that the first steps are taken on this downward course when a method unsuited to a particular child is forced upon him without profit. It is generally agreed, for instance, that many 'late-developers' in reading, children who are three or four years behind, often learn more successfully by the phonic method. Conversely, the methods used in teaching backward adults in the army, and said to be highly successful, seem to have been on the lines of the sentence method.

The truth is that method in itself may become



formalized and effete if not evolved out of principles based on study and hard-won knowledge. It is common to speak casually of reading as a tool, instrumental to the learning of other subjects. This is to under-rate its intrinsic importance. It is a tool, but it is more; the means of access to further learning, but not that alone. It is the road to finer and better experiences of life reached through reading literature and through contact with language that is precise, sensitive, expressive. In some degree this kind of process is going on, even in an elementary way, in early reading lessons. It is a seeking for, and taking in of, meaning, responding to, and getting impressions from, words and language. It is of the same order, though at a very simple level, as the training in reading and language study that goes on later in school life, and should have consequences of a profound nature, influencing attitudes and character in ways which have already been indicated. Such possible consequences depend, it is true, on the acquisition of a technique but they transcend it in significance.

Misconceptions on this point, confusing the acquisition of a skill with the evolvment of a process, are revealed in the present outcry about falling standards, inefficient teaching and mistaken choices in method. A conception of reading as a technique that, once mastered, confers all benefits, tends to lead to search for a hundred-per-cent. success method of procuring it. Hence the nostalgia, appearing of late in letters to the Press for the good old days, the three R's and no frills. This somewhat utilitarian and materialistic outlook is often matched by fierce insistence on surface results. Frustrated and aggravated by what appears to be vagueness and lack of direction in new-method ideas, cavillers and carpers grow more and more irascible; and their constant reference to immature minds, in relation to learning, would seem to belittle the individual and creative qualities of childhood, ignoring the body of study and research that now throws so much light on the growth and development of children.

With this attitude goes a complaint of loosening authority and laxity: a grumble that learning nowadays is made pleasant and inciting instead of repellent and dreary. Drudgery is presumably to be thought of as virtue; interest, activity, play methods unworthy specifics for digesting un-

palatable facts. This stale and dusty creed seems to go back to past generations of educational practice and to regret the absence of 'tears' as a symbol of lack of seriousness to-day. The notion that interest, activity, purpose provide the generating power for normal progress and development in the physical and social realm is generally enough accepted. There seems no valid reason to suppose that these same incentives will not operate equally well in the educational field. That they effectively do so is the reason for their acceptance, not, primarily, for their humanistic or sentimental value.

There is no doubt that the outcome of this general conflict of opinion, as well as the progress of educational practice, would be greatly eased by further research, even in a subject as copiously studied as Reading already is. A clearer perception of principles, and a closer scrutiny of a method's relevance to principles, are also needed, both by those who teach and by those who train. So is a more studious appreciation of the whole field of reading activities in its widest and most significant implications.

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# NUMBER IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

*M. Brearley, Department of Education, University of Birmingham*

Little drops of water  
Little grains of sand  
Make a mighty ocean  
And a pleasant land.

To see a world in a grain of sand  
And a heaven in a wild flower,  
To hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
And eternity in an hour.

IT is possible to see in the verse and the poem symbols of the two important aspects of mathematics which we must have in mind when considering our teaching of this branch of thinking. We have, on the one hand, the practical study of quantitative thinking—a matter much concerned with everyday transactions—and, on the other, an appreciation of the subject as one of the avenues through which we glimpse the pattern and order or ‘laws’ of the universe. This may seem to some people a high falutin’ view of number in the primary school but it arises from the belief that no primary school teaching, or indeed teaching of any kind, can be sound which has not the long-term results in mind. No one who has witnessed the confusion and misery of many secondary school children faced with independent mathematics homework or who has asked a body of college students or a roomful of parents how they feel about mathematics, can be complacent about our procedure in the past. It would seem that the large majority of people has not achieved much satisfaction from either side of the study. If we answer the question, ‘How much mathematics does an adult use in everyday life if he doesn’t happen to use it professionally?’; we are next driven to ask, ‘Why, then, is so much time spent on it in school?’ Its major space on the time-table is partly, of course, an historical survival; formerly it was assumed that mathematics would train the mind in habits of logical thinking and that, therefore, even if it were never used afterwards, it had done its job. A huge volume of research<sup>1,2</sup> has shown that we can no longer count on this, though it still remains true that a gifted teacher can teach it in a way which makes it a training in thinking. If this were all, the time spent on it would still seem excessive, since the same would apply to gifted teaching in any subject, but this is not all.

Mathematics is in a favoured position for such training: its laws in the primary stages can be apprehended, in time, by all children. Even in the primary stage it involves more than a memorization of specific facts; it demands generalized thinking about things and the properties of things and the ability to think about some of life’s experiences in the abstract. Solving the easiest of problems involves some sustaining of attention, some exercise of judgment, some weighing of evidence and choice of alternatives. These ways of thinking are inherent in the subject matter and not extraneous to it. Mathematics, like all other ‘subjects’, represents the codified experience of the human race but, while each person goes through life untouched by certain areas of experience, all must encounter number. We give the children help in analysing their world and tidying their sense impressions into universal systems which can then be handled and manipulated. The ‘new approach’ in education puts the teacher in a particularly strong position for doing this because, firstly, he knows so much more than formerly of the actual content of children’s experience as he provides much of that experience in school, secondly, because he can therefore seize the minute for providing the material for the next step in thinking and, thirdly, because he can allow children the pleasure of making many of their own discoveries about the properties of number. (This last is perhaps one of the first steps in achieving our second objective: the gradual ‘uncovering’ of the structure of the world we live in.) This pleasure is important in itself and as a stimulus to further exploration. All modern theories of learning<sup>3,4</sup> emphasize the importance of the subjective conditions of learning and those of us who believe in the positive value of self-activity and zest for exploration because of their observed effects on actual children we have taught, have our views reinforced by modern experimental research.

It is proposed to take eight points summarized by W. A. Brownell<sup>5</sup> as characteristic of sound teaching in arithmetic and examine them with reference to modern methods in the primary school.



1. *We must teach at the rate at which the child learns.*

This involves the whole question of readiness for learning, the number content of children's minds when they enter school and rates of progress within the school. The informal timetable of a modern infants school should give scope for accurate observation on these points. Readiness for learning has been described as 'fitness of the mind at that time, in virtue of its past experience, to apprehend and assimilate the new fact'. There is much conflicting evidence<sup>5, 6, 7, 8</sup> about the value of postponing formal instruction: the evidence does at least make it clear that maturation is a factor in successful learning. Starting to learn a process too early or leaving it later than need be are both undesirable but surely not equally so. The later starter, if he has been ready for some time, will suffer nothing worse than lack of enthusiasm for the subject, which a good teacher can surely deal with, while the child who is muddled and feels a failure because of too early an introduction to formal work is a much more difficult problem. We need not despair, however, of learning to begin at the *right* time. Research can give us some help but personal research and observation can give us more. Children, put in contact with number situations, will show by their response if they are ready. If we know their present knowledge we have a fair idea of what can be learnt next.<sup>9, 9a</sup> This readiness is not purely a matter of Mental Age, or Intelligence Quotient (though they are important factors). Social background, interest and even temperament may prove to be stimulating or inhibiting factors: an 'orderly' child from a thriving shop background may well be ready to learn a process earlier than a child of higher Intelligence Quotient from an unpractical family, though the latter may make more number discoveries for himself. Desire to gain a technique of, for instance, scoring, possessed by others in his gang may well be a motive for the gregarious clubable boy, while for the solitary bookworm other motives must be tapped.

Research<sup>5, 9</sup> on the exact age at which any particular topic should be learnt brings many contradictory results but reinforces the findings of readiness research concerning the importance of maturation. We must know what a child knows and also where he is in his logical development. Piaget says,<sup>10</sup> 'the construction of number goes

hand in hand with the development of logic and a pre-numerical period corresponds to the pre-logical level.' He gives as an example his famous experiment in which a child watching the contents of a full glass being poured into two glasses was unable to perceive that the amount was still the same. The lemonade did not come so far up the glass and therefore was *less*. Many elaborations of this theme led him to believe that the perception needed to understand this idea comes with maturation independent of teaching. It can be *taught* before the ability matures but the learning is precarious, shallow and unreal. The long-term results of such teaching are not always disastrous but that they often are is evidenced very clearly in work at remedial centres where one meets many children who have lost the desire to *understand* and simply wish to know what to *do*. 'Do you subtract or divide? What do you put on top?' Every remedial teacher feels a sinking of the heart at such questions: they reveal the disease for which there is no quick cure. Modern methods of education, with their emphasis on interest in a subject as one of the signs of sufficient maturity to master it, can help us to avoid these disasters. It is a teacher's job to surround the children with materials which can arouse these interests. The capacity to feel the interest is, however, a matter of the maturation level of the individual. Learning to reason in arithmetic is a slow process which parallels mental development in general. The number items in Intelligence Tests can provide us with some food for thought in this respect. For instance, in the Terman & Merrill Revision of the Stanford Binet test we have the following items for Average Adult:

- (1) If 2 pencils cost 5 pence, how many pencils can you buy for 50 pence?
- (2) If a lad's wage is 20s. a week and he spends 11s. a week, how long will it take him to save 300s.?

Their inclusion at this point is proof that the majority of children have been unsuccessful in solving the problems before the age of sixteen. The processes of reasoning involved provide the difficulty—not the computation. Yet many teachers of primary school children expect a class to be able to do such problems because one or two children of superior mental calibre may have reached that stage in their reasoning ability.



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There have been many interesting enquiries into what number knowledge children have when they arrive at school. The summaries<sup>5, 11, 12</sup> of these are well worth studying and each teacher might make for himself some simple set of 'tests' based on a selection of these so that he may know where to begin—what knowledge, for instance, of enumeration, counting, matching, recognizing and recalling he has as a basis.

There is much disagreement about the 'indispensable minimum' for all children leaving the primary school (i.e. with I.Q's of 70 upwards). It seems important, however, that within a district and, at the least, within a school some agreement about this should be reached and that each teacher, at whatever age he meets the child, should take the responsibility for filling in the gaps in this minimum.

The needs of abler children will go far beyond the basic 'syllabus'. Many interesting ideas for them can be found in the A.T.C.D.E's pamphlet,<sup>13</sup> especially in Chapter II.

The next four points can be considered together:

2. *A child must see sense in what he learns.*
3. *The child's activities and the purposes of Arithmetic must harmonise.*
4. *Meanings must precede symbols: understanding must precede drill.*
5. *We must present arithmetic as an object of 'natural' interest.*

In (2) and (3) we have perhaps two of the most accepted tenets of 'the activity approach'. One of the commonest misunderstandings about modern methods is that which suggests that children's interests as they exist in the present are our only concern. They are important in themselves but also as the starting points and motives for further learning. A child who is personally involved in a situation because he is pursuing one of his own interests will learn better for a number of reasons. It has been shown that the factors causing interference<sup>2</sup> in learning have much less effect when the learner feels himself involved and when the material to be learnt has definite structure and meaning. What gives material this structure and meaning? It seems to come from two sources: one inherent in the material and one in the learner. The gestalt or pattern formed by the learner is conditioned partly by his need. If we make it important for a child to learn a given thing there is a fair chance that he will learn it, for motive gives



structure to the material. A child feels more responsibility for pursuing an idea that he has had himself than from carrying out an imposed task which, perhaps rightly, he regards as the teacher's responsibility!

Practice work is one of the necessary instruments of learning and, if the motive is adequate, will be willingly undertaken. This does not mean that children will not need the help of the teacher's 'discipline' to carry it out: few of us carry out laborious programmes without the help of external pressures. Practice alone may even have a negative result, the effect of unwilling practice may be simply to build up a greater resistance. The modern view that practice work should follow the experience of a need is based on the knowledge of the importance of 'acceptance'. Children who play at shop see the need for mastery of weighing, measuring and money facts. They enjoy using these facts after practice and then the practice and the experience reinforce each other constantly. Much of the practice work can take place incidentally: the teacher who knows where she is going will use every opportunity to refer to number in a natural way in the classroom.

The belief in the importance of experience as a basis of number work has other support. Experience, according to Gestalt theories, is always structured or organized or meaningful. Many experiments<sup>14, 15, 16</sup> have shown that meaningful material takes from one-quarter to one-eighth of the time to master as that required for the same quantity of meaningless material (and that means meaningful or meaningless to the learner). Anyone can demonstrate this for himself by trying to memorize, say, 149121720252833 and then asking himself how much less time it would take to learn: 'Starting with 1 keep on adding 3 then 5.'

One of the real difficulties which arises from letting the knowledge of abstract words outstrip the experiential background is the number of misunderstandings and misconceptions, many of which may be unsuspected by the teacher. An intelligent child of ten worried for days about 'a new kind of sum' which she did not understand. It was called 'the horizontal statement'! An impressive list of some misconceptions can be found in *Learning the Three R's*.<sup>17</sup> However, if we wish to aid the thinking of our children we can follow their experience with verbalized

insights which help them to remember and build on the vaguer insights which arise from it.

The authorities<sup>18, 19, 20, 21</sup> who have studied the causes of failure in solving 'problems' are unanimous in the view that children fail in their text-book problem solving because they have had little opportunity at school to learn to solve their own real problems and because they have not had the concrete experiences needed to make the terms of the arithmetical problems meaningful. It is easy to see how this has arisen. The time taken to work out the cost of an entertainment or the amount of material needed to make curtains or the like seems disproportionate to the actual amount of 'arithmetic' undertaken. Only the most gifted teachers could undertake to teach enough arithmetic by incidental work of this kind. The time spent on such problems however is not wasted if it gives meaning to all future 'sums' of that kind.

The importance of the discovery side of mathematics in the primary school cannot be over-estimated. The joys of discovery are too quickly forgotten by adults. A small boy rushed up to his teacher and said: 'Do you know what 39 and 17 are?' 'No,' said the teacher, 'Do you?' '56.' 'How did you get that?' asked the teacher. 'Oh, I just *thought* it,' was the reply, 'I *often* think things.' He was having experiences which gave him power over number and confidence in using it.

#### 6. *We must ensure orderly development of quantitative thinking.*

At first sight it would appear that this is just what modern methods do not ensure. They appear to be more of Piaget's way of thinking: 'Be prepared,' he says<sup>10</sup> 'to accept results in the order in which they come' and 'a knowledge of child psychology is more important than a knowledge of methods'. The seeming contradiction between this and Brownell's statement arises from the same source as many other contradictions—they refer surely to different spheres and stages of the learning process. A logical progression of ideas in the teacher's mind ensures that he can see which elements in the varied body of children's experience at any given time he should choose to comment on and build on. All experience is not equally valuable from the point of view of future learning. From a child's point of view, for instance, it may well be that the collecting of bus tickets ranks equal with the



collecting of stamps. For the adult, however, now one, now the other, may prove to be the basic experience which he wishes to enlarge on.

We do not get experience in an orderly way but a teacher can help a child to arrange the items of that experience. For instance, in giving practice work a teacher may well prepare sum cards which will be more valuable if based on a knowledge of the established order of difficulty of the processes.<sup>20</sup> Again, when a process has to be taught, the relevant research on the subject should surely be taken into account in choosing the method; see for instance, the case for using the equal addition method of subtraction in *Studies in Arithmetic*, Vol. II.<sup>9a</sup>

It seems sensible to make clear to the learner, by our methods if not by words, that the logical progression of ideas we teach as subject matter is a particular arrangement of experience which we have adopted in an attempt at a better understanding of experience.

7. *The way children think of numbers is as important as is the result of their thinking.*

Instant automatic response to number facts is generally agreed to be desirable in the more mechanical aspects of arithmetic but there are many stages in achieving this mastery. A child who is asked to give the answer to '6 add 8', a boy he does not 'know', may, by a roundabout process such as '6 add 6 and 2 more' get the right answer. A child who can do this is nearer mastery than one who cannot. The test question for the teacher seems to be: 'Do the children expect sums to yield to ordinary ways of reasoning or do they regard number knowledge as dogma which is inaccessible once it is forgotten?' The encouragement of self-activity and ingenuity helps to provide the steps to mastery, and the automatic response, when it is established, is seen as a quick way of summarizing a process of thinking rather than the acceptance of an authoritarian statement. An intelligent boy of eight at a remedial centre maintained that  $6 \times 8 = 43$  because 'the teacher had put it on

the board'. He was at the mercy of a faulty piece of chalk or a badly made figure because, though he 'knew'  $6 \times 7 = 42$  he was not in the habit of working out anything for himself.

Modern ideas of the importance of a variety of experience for later learning are reinforced by such concepts as Tolman's<sup>22</sup> 'cognitive map'. He points out—what is common experience to us all—that with some purpose in mind we can often remember things which we did not consciously notice at the time. His view of learning as the formation of a new realization or expectation of 'what will lead to what' emphasizes the need to use and re-use this 'cognitive map' in the pursuit of specific purposes. For instance, children who have had many number experiences

can work back over them for evidence of rules made explicit by the teacher. 'When you collected halfpennies from each of your group the shopkeeper gave you a packet of sweets which cost fourpence. Eight halfpennies make fourpence. Eight halves make four wholes.' 'When you had a party in the Wendy house you had to cut your four cakes into halves because there were eight people.' 'When we had a puppet show we only put ten chairs in a row so that people could see. Eighty people were coming. Do you remember how many times we had to count the seats to see if there

were enough? We could have done this a quicker way—Eight rows of ten make eighty.' (We must be clear that we are using this as basic experience rather than with the idea of giving a technique. For many years after they 'know'  $8 \times 10 = 80$  many children will want to count them all!) Our job, in the early teaching of number consists to quite a large extent in aiding this working back over experience and picking out and making explicit the patterns that are there.

8. *Children must know both what they are to learn and how well they are learning it.*

It has been shown by research<sup>23, 24</sup> that clear knowledge of how one is progressing by comparison with one's own early scores has a

Miss Brooke Gwynne and Miss Brearley have written the first two articles in this issue to supplement those published in May on 'Standards in School'. In that issue our contributors showed both that a technological society has the right and need to demand high standards of teaching from its schools, and that schools to-day are giving to children a wealth of experience which is essential if they are to learn to live happily in society. This month our contributors show that, in the hands of teachers who fully understand them, modern methods of teaching the basic skills are very much more effective than the old because they are based on scientific knowledge of the whole child, who is essentially a learning creature.—Ed.



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definite effect on progress. The modern approach, which puts the emphasis on individual work and individual records of progress rather than competition, is clearly reinforced. In trying to beat our own previous scores we have a 'safe' motive, i.e. success is always possible, at least in the primary grades. The idea of being top of the class can be an incentive only to the few while improvement is possible to all. Here again, enlightened modern practice, which arose partly as a recognition of the importance for mental health of the way a child feels about his work, is seen to be borne out by research into efficacy of learning.

The importance of 'knowing what they must learn' is recognized in the practice of many 'activity' schools of making explicit to children of about 9-10 what they need to know for entrance to secondary schools and demonstrating to them when they know it. Self-correcting and self-testing devices all contribute to this. Another psychological principle is involved here, the 'reinforcement of effect'.<sup>25</sup> 'A right response reinforces the learning, a wrong one often perpetuates confusion.' The modern practice of avoiding mistakes in the beginning of learning (e.g. having access to tables, dictionaries, etc.) is shown to be conducive to good learning as it strengthens the tendency to repeat the right response.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the practice of presenting ideas in many contexts has a sound basis: if we wish to prevent incidental stimuli from getting in the way of learning we must make clear to a child what he knows in a variety of situations.<sup>27</sup>

Thus it would seem that modern methods of education, which to the onlooker sometimes

seem haphazard, satisfy a pretty exacting list of requirements. Such research<sup>28, 29, 30</sup> as has been done on the effect of these methods on children's arithmetical knowledge bears out these statements. Much more research is needed and when teachers, who can best do this, are a little less pressed, perhaps they will undertake it.

There is a story told about the Florentine painter who 'discovered' perspective. He stayed up all night playing with the idea and when his wife reproached him all he replied was, 'How delightful a thing is this perspective!' We could make a revolution in attitudes to arithmetic if every teacher's aim were to leave his children thinking: 'How delightful a thing is this Arithmetic!'

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# THE GOOD INFANT SCHOOL—III

## PLAYING THEIR WAY TO THE THREE R's

E. R. Boyce

IN discussing effective education, I suggested that, in the course of growing up and adapting to the reality of life in a good Infant school, children will achieve the skills of which they are capable. For most of them, these skills include the reading of simple books, the manipulation of small numbers and the ability to write with a pencil. In some cases, at the present time, this achievement is an urgent need because parental anxiety has reached the exaggerated proportions of judging children's whole worthiness by their ability to read and write. The staff of a good school recognizes such anxieties and sacrifices their own preference for certain methods and dogma to the strivings of the children to satisfy their parents.

Teachers, who will know the family backgrounds, have to decide whether it is better to stabilize a sense of competence by teaching a child to read as soon as he is able to do so or to delay instruction because he needs more time for steady growth in other directions. They may have to consider the wisdom of hurrying a given child's interest in reading and seek ways of doing so.

These are the only real problems about the age of learning to read. The question of readiness presents no difficulty to teachers who accept the fact that the skills of reading and writing, like those of walking and talking, cannot be achieved until a child is ready *to be able* to learn. They know that it is useless, even harmful and always wasteful, to try to hurry the ripening and integration of unseen growth-forces which make children organically capable of learning *how* to learn to read. Nor is recognition of readiness a problem when children are challenged daily by their environment. When these unseen maturing forces are capable (ready) of functioning, children in the good school, seek out the kind of experience that will satisfy an awakening interest. This is the time to hurry interest if it is for a child's good, or to give more opportunities for further experiment and exploration. (In the discussion<sup>1</sup> which followed, the general opinion was that it

was best to follow up signs of 'readiness' as soon as possible. My own opinion is not so firm, a good deal depends on the nature of the following up.)

Let us return to the question of the challenging environment. As a child matures, educative experience in the form of things, people, situations and purposes play a progressively more important rôle. Feelings of new power are woven together with feelings of interest and fresh surges of curiosity compel wider experiment with greater discoveries. The good school is ready to meet and guide a child as he goes forward to further conquests of the adult world and to greater self-knowledge and mastery. When he is able to learn the way of learning to read and write, he finds the tools ready to hand. These include materials, friends to learn with, teachers to encourage and approve, and leisure. Should they also include instruction?

To answer this question, we must consult our knowledge of children. Every skill develops by

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| OCTOBER 16-23             | Conference : <b>World Understanding and World Organization.</b>                                 |
| OCTOBER 22-26             | <b>The Teaching of Mathematics.</b>   |
| OCTOBER 24-30             | <b>Half-term Recreative Course.</b>   |
| OCTOBER 30-<br>NOVEMBER 2 | <b>Hallowe'en House Party</b><br>(with Square Dancing).   |
| NOVEMBER 6-9              | (1) <b>Painting and Living</b> (Joanna Field and Harold Walsby).<br>(2) <b>German Week-end.</b> |
| NOVEMBER 13-16            | <b>Anniversary Party</b> (and General Meeting of Members and Associates).                       |

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<sup>1</sup> This is the third of five articles by Miss Boyce, the first two of which we published in March and June, 1953. They contain the substance of lectures given to members of The Nursery School Association last Autumn.—Ed.





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degrees out of preceding phases of growth. Speech development begins with the sounds a baby makes in the first few weeks of life. Walking is an achievement at the end of a long series of developing co-ordinations and experience. The ability to learn to write began in babyhood with handling, poking, grasping, playing with bricks, marking with any kind of tool. Each succeeding co-ordination, effected by the growth of unseen organs, compelled the exploring child to seek out fresh experience in the form of tools for marking and surfaces to mark on. He wants to scribble, he seeks the suitable tools and then practices the skill (plays at it). Lumps of chalk, pointed stones, pencils; anything can be used to serve his need and any surface will do—walls and pavements included.

Then he comes to the good infant school. There are the marking tools, bright crayons, thick pencils, chalks. They challenge him to play his games of scribbling. There are the surfaces—legitimate surfaces—millboards, papers, a big board on the floor or wall. And there is plenty of time to do what he wants and he feels that his teacher is willing and approves. In his experi-

ments, he makes every sort of mark which he will use when he spontaneously takes to writing letters. The challenge does not stop there. The teacher he has grown to love and admire writes words and naturally he wishes to identify himself with her and do what she can do. Books are brought to his notice. His name is written on his possessions. It is not surprising that he soon mixes letters with scribble and decorates his drawings with them. His teacher's pleasure and his own delight in achievement, send him practising with enthusiasm. Each voluntary practice contributes to his ability and adds to his control. Now he deliberately repeats what may have seemed to be a haphazard activity. Through freedom to use well-chosen materials in the challenging environment of a good school and with the guidance of a good teacher, he has played his way to writing as he played his way to walking. But in both cases, there was encouragement, things to use and to experiment with and opportunities for practice. Of course, greater skill will grow out of the beginnings. In fact the play in the five-year-olds' classroom is the foundation for the firmness of pencil at seven



and eight and the fluent ease of eleven and twelve. Handwriting instruction may be necessary in the future. We shall deal with this possibility later.

The genetic origin of reading is the spontaneous interest in looking and recognizing; mother's face, other faces, shapes in connection with the needs of food and drink, shapes of moving objects, then pictures and the looks of sameness and of difference. By three years, children are drawing the shapes of the familiar house and man and naming them. Thus they are already using and recognizing the symbol, i.e. the small shape instead of the thing. Development in drawing brings more insight. The shape can now represent an idea and a pattern of symbols conveys his meaning. Meanwhile, the growth of the eye and the strengthening of eyesight stimulate an interest in pictures with more detail, in play with smaller objects and oddly-shaped parts like jigsaws. These little things are scrutinized and each scrutiny gives the eyesight practice. Innumerable adjustments have to be made according to the variety and pattern of things looked at (not merely seen). From long sight, eyes are slow in adjusting to seeing close and becoming used to change of focus.

This development varies enormously by school age. Some children have had no experiences of 'looking into'. Others may be physiologically immature as far as eyesight is concerned. Through a wise selection of materials and opportunities for use, the good Infant school provides each one with the experiences he wants at the time of his awakening power and his impulse towards the mastery of his world through looking and recognizing. They play their way to reading while they are playing their way to writing. The same materials often serve both purposes. All the making, drawing and painting; the manipulation of small shapes, the recognition of detail, the cutting out and sticking in; the matching and sorting; every activity in which the hand guides the eye; shop play with various coins—all have riches to offer a child who is learning the way of learning to read. Besides, there is the challenge of picture books, the stories their teacher writes for them, the books she reads from. And another challenge to interest in the freedom to get together round a picture and to share in the chatter that it stimulates. Yet another in following the ideas as a story unfolds. The natural outcome of these

experiences is the writing of a meaningful word under a picture of their own and the delight of discovering that 'I know what that says.'

This is reading at their level. They have played their way to this achievement just as they played their way to speaking. They have had no need of instruction but have slipped into knowing 'how' in their own 'pre-logical' unordered way.

Under the same conditions and in the same stimulating classroom environment, they extend their understanding of how measurement is managed in the world of grown-ups. Their first ideas came with play and exploration, with their growing powers of locomotion, their observation and games of pretence. The good school does not interfere with their discovery. All the handling, manipulating, building, pouring, filling, syphoning, making, estimating and arranging is their educative experience, and it provides the understanding which becomes completely absorbed through their interest. They slip into the skill of making figures just as they write their first letters. Free communication and discussion provides them with the language of measurement and gives them insight into the sequence of numbers and their significance. So they play their way to arithmetic.

In the matter of the three R's, as in everything else, the good Infant school aims at effective education through the satisfaction of the children's needs. But this is impossible without considering their way of growing. In learning how to learn, they take their own time and use their own intuitive, unsystematic way of discovery. They gain nothing from step by step instruction and the large majority are too emotionally immature to follow lessons, even if they are 'ready'. In the next two articles, I hope to continue the subject of effective education, dealing with other developments and needs and the way in which the good school meets them. Instruction and lessons will be discussed.

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THE N.E.F. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, ASKOV, AUGUST, 1953, will be reported briefly in the November *New Era*, and Dr. Laurin Zilliacus' paper on *The Philosophy of the New Education* and Miss M. L. Hourd's summary of the conclusions of the Group Leaders will be published in full.

Other articles will deal with the Secondary Education of non-Academic Adolescents and will include papers by Dr. Mary Swainson of Leicester, Mr. A. A. Bloom, and Mrs. P. Broyd of the East Ham Youth Employment Office, London.—ED.



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## The First Year in School

E. R. Boyce

Miss Boyce writes with wise and sympathetic understanding of the problems which face five-year-old children when they leave the sheltered familiarity of home for the new atmosphere and unknown surroundings of school. She traces their progress towards readiness for the school work of later years, stressing the fundamental truth that personal experience is the basis of all their understanding at this stage. The clarity and comprehensiveness of her thought make this book an important work on a vital aspect of educational technique.

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## Book Reviews

**The First Year in School.** E. R. Boyce. (Nisbet. 12/6).

Ever since Margaret McMillan's great work at Deptford placed Nursery Schools in the forefront of the public eye, too little attention has been given to the needs of the children during their first year at the Infant school. Miss Boyce has now filled this gap by a stimulating and constructive book. It happens that in Britain children begin school at five when their needs are governed by the practice and thought of the nursery rather than of the schoolroom. Over twenty years ago this was made clear by the report of the Consultative Committee, and ever since Nursery School enthusiasts have claimed that their children should remain with them to six and possibly even later. Continental practice with its greater emphasis on formal training has always accepted a later age of entry. It has, therefore, been left to our 'Infants' schools to receive their children at five and make the best of the difficult job of bridging the gap between infancy and childhood. Their success in so doing has varied enormously from school to school.

Miss Boyce writes from personal experience and is careful to illustrate her ideas by many pen pictures of children's thought and action. Her writing has the conviction of the experienced teacher who has proved her theories in practice and believes in them. To her there is no doubt that the job of the schools is 'to answer the children's individual needs in their struggle for self-mastery and in the establishment of satisfying relationship with the rest of their world'. Throughout, emphasis is placed on individuality and on the supreme difficulty of honouring individual needs in the presence of groups of forty. Instruction has no place in the world of the five-year-old for their educational needs are met by doing, seeing, hearing, speaking, touching, imagining and, above all, realizing. The teacher, and behind her the members of Managers and Education Committees, set the scene and provide the security and affection without which a healthy childhood is impossible.

In discussing the needs of the school and the difficulties of the teachers, the miserable conditions of many of our schools and the unimaginative provision of school equip-

ment receives sharp criticism. It is high time that the nation stopped paying lip service to education and really got down to the task of putting schools right. Yet Miss Boyce keeps balance and does not allow the immensity of the need to deflect her from giving full advice on how to overcome the meanest conditions. Thus, after a discussion of the pattern of school life and the possibility of understanding without lessons, she takes each of the broad fields of learning—language, measurements, books—and analyses carefully the reasons whereby each can provide the background for the child's natural growth. No-one who is in daily contact with five-year-olds, whether at home or school, can fail to be fascinated by these discussions with their broad sympathy for and insight of the child's ways of thinking and growing.

Perhaps it all sounds too easy—place the child in a spacious setting where there is an atmosphere of encouragement and helpfulness, where he can feel relaxed and free to venture, and then his own spirit of inquiry and the mysterious process of maturation will do the rest. This presupposes,



however, teachers with deep sensitivity, intelligence and faith—a combination which is perhaps rarer than the author would care to admit.

There is always the child in every class who fails to react to the normal stimulus of companionship, security and worth-while activity. Such a child makes an undue demand on the teacher who may have little time or energy to sort out his difficulties or to devise the right stimulus. It is here that the many practical observations will be of the greatest assistance to teachers who are faced with planning their work. The list of materials available for five-year-olds, the suggestions for grouping of equipment and for layout of the classroom will be a help to many less experienced readers who will be glad of new ideas or of confirmation of their own practice. Throughout, it is the five-year-old who is considered in relation to his limited experience and growing needs. Entry to school, as has been shown by recent articles in *The New Era*, presents both opportunities and problems which are well discussed and sympathetically handled. Here then is a worthwhile and stimulating book which will record for the future the best practice and thought of teaching normal five-year-old children in the middle years of this century.

A. L. Hutchinson

**Phantasy in Childhood.** Audrey Davidson and Judith Fay. (Routledge and Kegan Paul. 18/-).

In their book *Phantasy in Childhood* the authors have set out to show, with the help of a quantity of valuable clinical examples, that unconscious phantasies have their roots in infancy and are fundamental and universal. Their observations, which are based on the work of Mrs. Melanie Klein, are set forth in a very pleasant straightforward style, satisfyingly free from jargon.

The first chapter deals with 'The World in Black and White' and the second with 'The Influence of the Real World'. The former is concerned with the young child's uncompromising attitude to 'Good' and 'Bad', and the latter chapter is concerned with the interaction between the child's inner life of phantasy and the real external world around it, and is, to my mind, the best chapter in the book.

The next four chapters deal with the various phases of early emotional development and describe phantasies connected with the mouth, with genital feelings, with excreta and with 'middle childhood'. The book ends with a vivid and detailed description of the working-through of the unconscious phantasies of a most engaging small girl, Dinah,

from her birth to the age of three. Only one thing seemed to me to mar the full enjoyment of this chapter and that was the fact that so much of the material had already been presented earlier in the book. This, to my mind, reduced the full impact of the story on the reader and it would have been better if the authors could have made use of other examples in the early part of the book.

The clear style and avoidance of technical terms make the book very readable and I would suggest that, even as it stands, it will appeal to a wider public than the psycho-analytically orientated one for whom the authors claim to be writing. It is true, however, that after reading a most attractive fairy-tale opening, the reader is plunged rather rapidly and with little warning into descriptions and possible interpretations of unconscious phantasies. This seems a pity since it may deter the bulk of the uninitiated, who after all are those who most need the enlightenment this work can bring, from finishing the book. Perhaps in future editions the authors could preface their book with some preliminary explanations and remarks to reduce the fears of those unused to the concept of unconscious phantasy.

This book has much to offer to all those who have the welfare of children in their hands, whether they be teachers, nursery workers or parents. It should help to allay many fears about the 'over-imaginative' child and, to quote the authors, show how 'good development lies not only in the ability to express phantasies in a socialized way, but above all by the development of the phantasies themselves. The living through of phantasies implies not a mere discarding of them, as a snake shuffles off his skins, but the modification and integration of them as the centre of life'.

Beryl Sandford

**Talks to Boys and Girls.** (Krishnamurti Writings, 29 Park Lane, Wembley, Mddx. 7/6).

Throughout most of December, 1952, Krishnamurti spent twenty minutes each morning talking to the boys and girls of the Foundation for New Education, Rajchat-Banaras, and answering their questions. The ages of the children ranged from 9 to 20. Reading these talks has been of the greatest help to me personally, but I find it difficult to review them. I find myself convinced of the truth of what he says and, as so often happens in such cases, I want everybody in education and out of it to have the opportunity of a

similar experience. Yet a summary might well prove a stumbling block. For what is important is not what Krishnamurti says but the experience of being conducted by him through the tortuous labyrinth of one's own thoughts to the point where it is realized that no effort of the mind will remove the barriers to Truth. For it is at that point that the mind may become 'very quiet, very still' and 'in that stillness you find what is true' because, when the barrier of anxiety is removed, intelligence and love—and so understanding and creative peace are there. Some readers of a summary might well be put off by Krishnamurti the revolutionary, while others might wish to read more in order to become 'disciples', from Krishnamurti's point of view an even worse result. He is never tired of saying or implying that his words are only to awaken the intelligence and that mere acceptance of what he says will help nobody.

What happens to one as one reads these talks, the children's questions and Krishnamurti's answers? One by one the props which support for the main part the structure of our life and society and so of our schools are removed. One becomes convinced that authority, ambition, imitation, tradition, memory, competition, comparison, duty, discipline, belief, morality, respectability—all children of fear—are, to change the metaphor, barriers to what is really important—truth, love, intelligence, initiative, understanding, inner and outer peace, creativeness. One becomes convinced, that is, one is not too frightened to listen.

Education is thus seen to be a question of removing barriers, the barriers springing from anxiety and fear, the concern which each individual isolated in his own self-consciousness, has for his own continued existence, safety, reputation, and so on. 'Intelligence comes when there is no fear' therefore 'the essence of education is to free the student from fear' and so 'the teacher must be free from fear'.

It is fear which leads us to create authority, the outer authority of the powers that be and also the inner authority of the ideal. And authority destroys intelligence. When you go to an authoritarian school, especially one when you like the teacher, you go out from it 'filled with information which you can pick up at any time, but you have lost the vitality to enquire, to revolt'.

Ambition is another child of fear. 'The ambitious man is the most frightened man because he is afraid to be what he is.' He has not found his true vocation. 'Education should help you to be so intelligent that you can



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choose a job you love or starve, but not do something which will make you miserable for the rest of your life.'

The mind is the instrument of comparison based on memory, and 'comparative judgment makes the mind dull'. For how can one really look at a sunset or a person to understand them if one is looking in order to compare with yesterday's sunset or another person? 'So the mind creates a pattern in which it gets caught; so that it cannot look at anything afresh; and so it destroys that very perfume of life which is love'.

Belief is another by-product of anxiety, something beyond itself for the frightened mind to cling to, 'but it is only in freedom you can find what is true, what is God, not through any belief'. 'It is the function of education to create such individuals as are not bound by any form of belief, morality, respectability—to make individuals truly religious.'

Fear that people will not *naturally* do what is good either for others or themselves results in a belief in discipline, 'the process of making you do something you do not want to do by coercion, resistance, persuasion, compulsion, the offering you of a reward'. 'If you do not understand something, do not be compelled to do it' for if you are *made* to do something, even 'for your good' your sensitivity is thereby destroyed and with it 'your capacity to understand and love'.

The self-conscious individual is thus enclosed by the barriers he sets up to give himself illusory escape from anxiety and fear. Yet it is 'the natural instinct of every person to want to end

suffering'. The way is to become *more fully conscious*. When we can understand ourselves *as we are*, fearful, ambitious, envious, imitative, and so on, then *without any further effort on our part* we begin to be free of these states. Then there is intelligence, love, understanding, peace.

This summary is very incomplete and may have just the results I feared at the beginning of this review. But there it is. Someone may object. 'But these talks were given to children between the ages of 9 and 20. Could they follow? I think perhaps better than their elders. I read some of the earlier talks in this book on fear and authority to a group of Sixth Formers. There is no question they followed the drift and some were very disturbed. A good sign or a bad? A group of bright Fourth Formers were very attentive too, though not the whole Form. My own adolescent sons were very interested and a friend reports the same of her daughters.'

Krishnamurti's penetration into the heart of a problem can be seen when he is answering questions. I should like to end with a few examples:

Q. How to be intelligent?

A. You ask for a method. Intelligence is the very questioning of the method.

Q. What is real greatness and how can I be great?

A. You see the unfortunate thing is you want to be great . . . why are you not prepared to be what you are?

Q. Is beauty a subjective quality or an objective?

A. Why do you ask that question? To write an essay on it? You know?

school and at college you are asked to write essays and so what do you do? You collect, you read books and, like squirrels, collect ideas from books, from other people, and put all these ideas together on paper, and pass it on to the examiner . . .

Q. What is the purpose of creation?

A. When do you ask this question? When you are confused. If I am confused I can only receive an answer which is also confused. So what is important is not to ask 'What is the purpose of life, of existence?' but to clear the confusion that is in you and the causes of the confusion are very clear; they are in the 'me', in the 'I' that is constantly wanting to expand itself through envy, jealousy, hatred, imitation—when that confusion is cleared you will know the significance of existence.

Q. Why is truth unpalatable?

A. You avoid knowing what exposes your inner nature.

If, dear reader, you wish to avoid such exposure, you had better after all keep clear of Krishnamurti's talks.

Harold Pratt

**Education and the Spirit of the Age.** Sir Richard Livingstone. (Oxford University Press. 7/6. 1952).

There is a gracious wisdom about this book, which has two main themes. The author first invites us to consider the full meaning of the terms liberalism, rationalism and science, pointing out (page 3) that there is not only a positive aspect to them but that 'every quality is haunted by a defect, and we need to watch our virtues as well as our vices.' Having suggested further that a new philosophy of life, based on the appreciation of a variety of values, is needed to make these three determinants of our existence cogent and creative, Sir Richard proceeds to indicate with great lucidity the dangers inherent in what is vulgarly called the 'scientific outlook'. He emphasizes especially the limitations of a purely analytical outlook on life, not least as it affects the immature organisms of children, who are constantly exposed to its influence. 'Our civilization is increasingly built on analysis; it is the habit of mind which our higher education tends to produce, and the intellectual atmosphere which we breathe, and so its effects pass unnoticed.' I am not criticizing it, but pointing out its limitations; in places where its techniques are practised, a line of Wordsworth should be written up in large letters, as a warning of dangers that attend analysis,

'We murder to dissect.'



James Henderson

The early period is revealed as one when many schools were founded by individual Quaker effort. That from 1725 to 1779 was a period of consolidation rather than expansion. From 1779 however Meeting schools, such as Ackworth, were founded, specifically to preserve Quaker beliefs and ideals, among children of less affluent and 'disowned' Quakers, in the utilitarian spirit of Fox and Penn.

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for whom 'to be practical was to be scientific and religious'. The subsequent record of these schools is considered by Dr. Stewart in respect of finance, staffing, curriculum, government, punishment, ideals and co-education.

Although Dr. Stewart's view that the Friends' had by the nineteenth century become an essentially middle-class group perhaps needs more detailed analysis to be helpful in explanation, it is clear that their educational effort had contributed indirectly to the development of many, at least, of the so-called bourgeois virtues, to which reference is made. The fact that the Quaker schools, now of independent grammar boarding school type, cater largely for a socially privileged as well as religious minority, is of concern to those who feel the need for Quaker ideals and attitudes to be more deeply knit into our national life.

In the expansive Victorian era the Quakers became less of a peculiar people and their schools less narrowly utilitarian. Dr. Stewart explains this in the perspective, not only of the contemporary climate of opinion, but also of the whole complex of formative social, economic and educational influences at work in our national life. While he presents the emergence of

the Quaker community in the seventeenth century quite properly against the general development of a mystical and empirical outlook, not bound by the Authority of Church or Bible, he is little concerned to consider the changing social or regional composition of this anti-authoritarian and individualist movement. Neither does he consider the evidence which suggests that, in the period of James Naylor, 'quaking' could be equated with 'levelling', and that the Friends became a politically acquiescent minority sect on pacifist and quietist lines only after the Restoration.

In the Quaker schools for poorer children purely aesthetic and intellectual pursuits were at first suspect, and learning, as well as politics, was felt to be irrelevant to piety. This led to a concentration on moral and practical teaching, and to a certain neglect, not only of the imaginative arts, but also of classical, historical and other humane studies, except when it was found possible to adapt them to Quaker ideals. Later, abhorrence of the modern industrial world was overcome and efforts were made to liberalize the curriculum and to make qualified use of ideas developed both in Public and in Progressive schools. Dr. Stewart notes that modern Quaker education has often been in the lead,

and instances its early interest in teacher training and the education of girls; in the natural sciences, local surveys and civic studies; in speech training and the crafts; and in education in religion conceived as a social experience rather than a subject of instruction.

It is curious that, while hatred of violence has marked the Quaker social outlook, corporal and other harsh punishments, despite individual protests, long persisted in Quaker schools until better staffing, amenities and curricula enabled more enlightened methods to be adopted. Throughout, the evidence of old pupils shows that, despite their special pietism, the human history of Quaker schools has much in common with that of other contemporary schools.

Whether we are interested in the relation between vocational and cultural education, the development of a realistic content and a democratic organization in an education geared to moral or social ideals, the proper curriculum for the less academic, the conflict of values between school and society, or the future of independent or co-educational schools, we can find much valuable material for reflection in Dr. Stewart's comprehensive and well-documented record of the



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perience of Quaker schools in this country.

*W. E. Payne*

**Healthy People.** Cyril Bibby.  
(MacMillan. 6/-).

In this book, Cyril Bibby writes on health for children between the ages of nine and eleven years. His aim is to show them that to live healthily is also to live happily—a positive attitude to health. The author considers any attempt to encourage this positive attitude to health will fail in the absence of proper home and school influences, and he therefore addresses three prefaces; to teachers, to parents and to the children. In these prefaces the need for co-operation between school and home is stressed, but the final responsibility for good health is layed upon the individual. Throughout the book this sense of individual responsibility is continually stressed and encouraged. Exercises at the end of each chapter not merely test and revise but suggest practical things to do, such as making a salad for tea based on the foods mentioned in the chapter, finding out where our water supply comes from, and keeping a health dictionary. Included in these exercises are interesting riddles, cross-  
word puzzles, code messages and

missing word games that are so graded as to enable most children within the age range to test their mettle. Solutions to all these are to be found in the back of the book as also are some addresses from which useful advice and educational material may be obtained.

The book is in four sections. These deal with 'A Healthy Child', 'A Healthy Home', 'A Healthy School' and 'A Healthy Community'. Threaded through these sections the author presents the happenings of The Smith Family. In this family the children make their full contribution to its general welfare by cleaning their own shoes, bathing the baby occasionally and, yes, cleaning the bath after them. Their questions on how babies are made are answered by their parents. They are introduced to doctors, nurses, dustmen and other health workers, all of whom answer the children's questions about their particular contribution to the community's health.

Unfortunately not every child has a home environment in which he can discuss without embarrassment how a baby is born, particularly with adults of the opposite sex. This being so, I fear that as a text-book *Healthy People* may fail in its purpose. But as a class reference book it would be a most

interesting and useful addition to the class library of any Junior school.

*D. Robinson*

**Natural Therapy.** E. K. Lederman.  
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*M.J.K.*



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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NEW EDUCATION

*Laurin Zilliacus, Chairman of the New Education Fellowship Conference, Askov, Denmark*

THE NEW EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP has survived over thirty troubled years with wars and deaths and rebirths of its Sections, and it is still going strong. I do not believe that any organization that has no power and no financial resources behind it and no governmental support would survive so long and would continue to be a source of help and inspiration to thousands unless there were a common philosophy that united its members. I should perhaps make it clear at the outset that I am using 'philosophy' in the layman's sense of an outlook on life that is coherent. My first conclusion is therefore that there must be a common outlook that binds together the members.

There have indeed been various attempts at a formulation in words of this outlook, some of them quite good—at least those of us who took part in making them thought so—but none of them really satisfactory. None seems to have roused much interest or played more than a passing rôle.

If it is not on the grounds of formulated philosophy that people have joined the N.E.F., how and why have they joined? Many members have joined through attendance at some conference to which they were attracted by its programme. Others may have been attracted by an article in *The New Era* or some other periodical, and, of course, very many, probably most, have come through interest in the work being done in their own National Sections. Once in, they tend to stay in.

I conclude from this that our members are largely people who are trying to *do* something rather than to *formulate* or explain something. In the N.E.F. they have found others trying to do something along the same lines as themselves. They have found it helpful and stimulating to join together. In fact, they have found fellowship. So I think the basis of our membership is not a body of formulated tenets but an urge on the part of people trying to do something in education to join together with others in doing it. On the

other hand, 'doing' is based on 'seeing' or on a view of things, so we come back to the question—what is common to our very widespread membership that explains why they are doing things on the same lines?

That is what I want to explore, and my first line of exploration is to go back to the founding of our organization. The New Education Fellowship was formally founded at the first International Conference, which took place at Calais in 1921. The people who took the initiative were idealists who, on the one hand, were not satisfied with the treatment given children in most schools at the time and, on the other hand, were shocked at the failure of an education that had led mankind into the ruin and slaughter of the first world war. They concluded therefore that a renewal of education was essential. They also felt that this was not a concern of one country alone but the concern of all. They reached their hands out to like-minded people in other countries. So you got the New Education Fellowship founded on the idea of fellowship that cuts across boundaries and embraces the whole world, and the idea that Education is not a finished job, the humble attitude that new and better things in education are necessary and will no doubt always be necessary.

Next I want to explore the relationship between the N.E.F. and religion, because I think that in examining that relationship we touch on something of importance in the N.E.F. outlook. Now we have in our movement Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Moslems, and members of other religious groups. We have agnostics—people who say 'I do not know'—and atheists—people who say there is no God. Obviously no one body of religious doctrine or materialist doctrine can bind all these together. It is, if you come to think of it, an extraordinary achievement to have welded into fellowship and co-operation people from such widely different beliefs regarding extremely important matters, and to have them united in



as sensitive and central an area of human life as education. And now I am going to say something that I hope will not offend any of my friends in clearly-defined religious groups. It is this: the more severely and literally anyone takes his dogma, the more unlikely he is to join the Fellowship or to remain in it. Let me take some extreme examples. Persons whose doctrine tells them that they may not eat together with people outside of their particular religious group because that would make them unclean and unacceptable to God would find it difficult to join our conferences; people who belong to a religious sect that tells them that dancing, music, drama or other forms of entertainment are sinful could hardly take part in many of our discussions and activities; and people whose doctrine tells them that it is sinful to do almost anything on Saturday would miss a great deal of our conferences. All these are obvious practical difficulties, but there seem to me to be just as great difficulties and just as effective barriers in matters of the mind if you adhere to too narrow or severe religious doctrines. Having said this, I now want to say something that I hope will not offend my friends in the group that has an atheistic outlook. It is this: I can find no better word to describe something vital in the common N.E.F. outlook than the word 'religious'. Let me explain.

As I look around our membership and founders and at prominent representatives of the New Education, indeed, for that matter, as I look into myself, I see that we are people who are seeking to understand the place of man in the world, or rather in the whole universal scheme of things, and that we are people who find our fundamental inspiration through serving what in the course of this seeking we come to feel is some purpose, some meaning behind it all. To put it another way, we find our inspiration in sinking ourselves in the great adventure of mankind down the centuries.

Those who believe in a personal deity will phrase this outlook in one way, the agnostic and atheist in another. The theist will say: 'What we are trying to do is to seek to understand God's creation, to find His will with mankind and to serve it.' Translated to a practical plane, this always seems to mean serving what he conceives to be the advance of mankind. The non-theist might phrase it as follows: 'I am seeking to understand my place, the place of man in the whole of

life, and I find my inspiration and ultimate motivation in making my contribution to the whole stream of life, playing my part in helping to enrich it and make it grow more individualized in its manifold expressions.' Both meet in an attitude of humility and reverence for life, in regarding their own self-perfection as possible only by sinking themselves in the bigger whole, and indeed in regarding the meaning of self as non-existent except in relation to the whole. Such an outlook might, of course, be called idealistic and left at that, but this word 'idealistic' has for me so many controversial associations that I am not quite satisfied with it. In my use of words, 'religious' covers it better.

I am next going to explore, necessarily somewhat superficially, the outlook of N.E.F. people as I know them in regard to education. Our members are not only drawn from different religious groups. They are drawn from different professional groups and geographical locations. We have parents, we have teachers in all forms of educational institutions serving all ages and stages. We have administrators, health and social workers, doctors, psychologists, sociologists, and a host of others. We have people living in diverse economic and social conditions and working in different school systems and problems. There must therefore be a wide range of specific educational interests among our membership. They will have different answers to the question 'What do we want as the next step?' Some will say: 'Until we can relieve the secondary school of the burden of academic examinations we cannot do any really fruitful educational work.' Others will say: 'Until we can provide play schools or kindergartens we have no right basis for education' and others will say: 'Until we grant more freedom in the school, freedom for the child to make choices and participate in running its life, we will not develop sound citizens.' Others will say: 'Your freedom means nothing compared to the basic task of giving food and shelter to children. To starving children your freedom means as much as it means to a blind man to give him the freedom to choose tickets either to an art exhibition or a fashion show.'

Listing a series of aims and objectives in education that will satisfy all our members is therefore a difficult task. You will not find any member who objects to giving children enough food to keep healthy, but in Denmark I do not think you



would list that as a No. 1 problem of schools. If you did so, your list would not have much appeal, just as some other objectives would not have a strong appeal in some other country. But the very fact that our membership is drawn from so wide a field and that the specific educational needs and problems are so varied has contributed to another element in the N.E.F. educational view. That view is that education is a whole. No detailed problem in education can be effectively dealt with unless you see it in relation to the whole educational problem; and the whole educational problem, as is now clear to all of us, includes all that affects the growth and development of children rather than what happens within school walls. So seeing education as a whole is a definite part of the N.E.F. outlook and our organization has played an important rôle in throwing bridges from one part of the educational field to another. We bring together in common fellowship and study teachers from parts of educational systems that normally organize in separate groups and often do not understand each other very well. The N.E.F. view that education is a whole problem extends of course beyond national boundaries. It is, I think, a part of our concepts that you cannot solve educational problems, which are so much bound up with the life of society, in one part of the world and leave other parts of the world out. The educational problem is a world problem.

I should now like to explore, still on a rather superficial level, certain more specific attitudes towards the educational problem and attempt to find common elements behind them. Let us recall some New Education practices that are, or have been, particularly prominent in various places and during various periods of our existence. They are perhaps best called to mind through the slogans or slogan-like names given to the schools practising them—the Activity School, the Free School, the Creative School, the Child-Centred School are four examples. The Activity School leapt into prominence when it became part of the New Education view that the educational process is active and not passive. Where the child previously learnt by heart a set *pensum* from a given text book, he now absorbed knowledge and acquired skill through working actually with a widening range of material from various sources. Professor Findlay of Manchester University called this process 'Turning fact into

faculty'. The Free School meant in the early days, above all, freedom from a martinet discipline, from conducting life by external rules rigidly imposed from without, and the attempt to substitute self-discipline growing from within. It soon also came to mean freedom from rigidly imposed method and content of curriculum, allowing instead some measure of choice for the individual and of guidance to the teacher by the interests of the child. The Creative School meant in the earlier days on the one hand a school in which some measure of creative work was given a place even in the traditional academic subjects, but it meant above all the introduction of the arts into the curriculum. That was an uphill task, the battle was long and hard and is still being fought in many schools and educational systems.

The Child-Centred School is a name that summarizes these others. It was first coined, I believe, in Professor H. Rugg's book on the various New Education schools he had seen. What he meant was that teachers were beginning to turn their interests on the child rather than on 'subjects', and determining both content and method of what they found. The child-centred attitude led to scientific child study, to including psychology in the arsenal of the teacher. It led to a realization that individual variations in the different children are not just a nuisance which must be repressed, but are rather something which you must take note of, because it is the very stuff of personality. At the back of all this, or arising out of this, came the view of each growing child as an individual, as something unique and precious in itself, and something that had a right to grow into what was predetermined by its own nature rather than something that teachers or other grown-ups decided should be the end-product. It led to regarding education as a process of helping growth rather than of moulding to a predetermined form. Here too much has been achieved, but the battle is not yet won. The victory has perhaps been delayed by the lengths to which some schools went. There were New Education schools where the emphasis was so completely on the newly-discovered 'precious' individual that the child began to regard itself as perhaps a little too precious, as indeed the centre of the universe.

There was a corrective to that in the other pole of education, which came into force parallel with



the discovery of the individual. This was the recognition that society has a stake in education. The educator acknowledged the demands and needs of society as well as the demands and needs of the growing individual. In the earlier days this meant taking a more enlightened view of many of the traditional subjects. Sir Percy Nunn put the view persuasively in speaking of the content of education as being the great achievements of mankind through the centuries, the streams of creative activity that have produced bodies of knowledge, skill, awareness, and understanding in various fields. One of the demands of society on the rising generation was undoubtedly considered to be that they carry on the cultural heritage. Personally I think this was a valuable element in education. What has inspired man to the greatest mental effort and devoted toil is no poor criterion in choosing material for some stages of education. Recognition of the demands of society also meant, of course, the idea of preparing for citizenship and trying to produce informed and socially responsible adults. But this social view of education was not only founded on consideration for the needs of society, but also for the needs of the child. It had become obvious that the child is a social being, needing relations to its fellows and society, and is not a harmoniously developed person unless this side too has had attention.

In more recent years psychological study and a general increase in awareness and sensitivity of those who are interested in education have led to a somewhat more profound conception than that of various 'sides' that need to be catered for in education. Freedom we now see not only as freedom *from* various restrictions but as liberation *of* energy from deep sources, such liberation coming both through the removal of internal barriers in the psyche and through the individual's finding new means to express himself. That, of course, leads once more to the question of art and education. We no longer regard art as just one other side of child nature which must be given a chance of development, one more need to be supplied in addition to others. We are coming to look on art, or rather on creativeness, as basic to human growth. We see that to nourish sources of imagination and liberate its expression is something of central importance to the individual.

Through creative activity the individual not only *finds* himself, he reconstructs his own personality and *becomes* himself, a unique being. This

way, too, his freedom; to be, rather than to copy or reflect, is surely to win freedom. But the process does not take place in isolation. We have come to see that the development of the unique and rich individual, the acquisition of freedom through becoming yourself, is possible only in a living relationship with others, with indeed more than just others, with all of life. We have found that creativeness rises in intensity and increases in richness in a group that has become a living unit with mutual give-and-take. New understanding emerges and new energies are freed, new creation results. It is as though, when group relations were right, some common source of energy and inspiration were tapped, as though we met each other on a deeper plane and drew nourishment from each other.

We have in this Conference had experience of the fact that in creative work in groups, 2 plus 2 does not equal 4 but 5, 6, or even 7, which is a holy number. The view is thus now becoming a part of the N.E.F. outlook that the individual and society are one, as the leaves and the vine. Neither is possible without the other, each produces the other. We regard life as individualized but as having every least part of it in a vital relationship with all the rest. We realize that there are no bars, no sharp boundaries in the living world, indeed not in the mineral world either. There is no break in continuity. There is certainly no break in human continuity at whatever boundaries politicians or generals may have drawn. That is, I think, our view of life and, therefore, of education.

Does all this add up to a philosophy? It certainly does not add up to a body of doctrine that can be used as a test of admission to the New Education Fellowship. It often lies below the level of conscious thinking. It is more an attitude towards life than a body of philosophical doctrine. But it has an intellectual content that can at least be indicated in words whether I have succeeded in doing so or not. The various parts of that intellectual content do, I think, hold together well enough to be called a coherent outlook on life.

\* \* \*

[This was the Chairman's main lecture at the International Conference of the New Education Fellowship at Askov, Denmark, August, 1953. Some particulars of the Conference and Miss M. L. Hourd's admirable commentary will be found on pp. 184-186 of this issue.—ED.]



# PSYCHOLOGICAL 'CLIMATES' AND THE NEW EDUCATION

Mary Swainson, Lecturer in Education, University College of Leicester

THIS number of *The New Era* contains accounts of two experiments in the educational and vocational guidance of secondary modern school pupils.<sup>1</sup> From them it is clear that achievement depends on subtle emotional 'climates', so that if we want to raise standards we must raise the quality of human relationships. In this introductory paper I am concerned to look at some basic psychological climates in schools and colleges and in particular at those in which the New Education can, or cannot, flourish. Teaching methods, whether 'new' or 'old', are but the outward manifestation of the interaction of minds, conscious and unconscious; indeed, to be effective, methods must derive straight from the deeper convictions and attitudes of the teaching staff. If a discrepancy should exist between inner attitude and overt method as, for instance, when the letter without the spirit of democratic activity operates in a learning situation, then the level of achievement will probably suffer. It is this discrepancy that justifies so much of the current criticism of modern methods. But critics should take care to distinguish between *abuse* of the New Education by incompetent teachers and the operation of its principles in a fitting 'climate'.

## Psychological Climates unfavourable to the New Education

During experience of five years in a Training College and seven in two University Education Departments, I have found the following examples of attitudes that make the New Education impossible:

### (a) *In Schools*

- (i) The teacher who told me wearily, 'Oh, the Inspectors want activity, so we must lay it on, *but* in my opinion . . .'
- (ii) A class mistress who believed wholeheartedly in the principles. 'But it is no good trying to put them into practice because the Head is against them and will spoil everything.' (Many unsuccessful attempts were made in this school to introduce democratic methods into one

or two classrooms whilst the school as a whole was run as a dictatorship.)

- (iii) The lonely pioneer who carried out a project in her class but who received no co-operation from her colleagues. The children commented, 'With Miss Y. we can work like this but with the others you would get your head bitten off.'
- (iv) The Headmistress who was keen to carry out a large project which would include the whole of her secondary modern school, involving co-operation and team work among the staff. Most of the younger staff were willing, but the older members were frightened and hostile. The school was split throughout by a feud and the children knew it.
- (v) The master who thought activity was an excellent idea because he could leave the class and get on with his marking. (This man gave the children responsibilities that by right should have been his. They became bored, anxious and time was wasted. He could not understand why the Head told him that the standards of his class were deteriorating. Many lazy teachers unconsciously cover up their deficiencies by claiming that their particular brand of *laissez-faire* is the New Education in action.)
- (vi) The Headmistress who was over-anxious to impress inspectors and other visitors so that her school always had a wonderful display of results of 'activity'. The staff, however, although believing in the New Education themselves, were frustrated and rebellious because they realized that principle was being sacrificed to expediency. Any visitor who spent longer than one afternoon in the school soon realized that propaganda was valued more highly than education.

### (b) *In Teacher Training*

- (i) The young two-year trainee who was flung into a class on her first school practice to do a project. She had been

<sup>1</sup> The Secondary Modern School caters for about 70% of English boys and girls between 11 and 15 who have not been selected for Secondary Grammar or Technical Schools.



given some theory but no experience in her college course of the co-operative atmosphere that she was expected to establish in her classroom. She was already sufficiently nervous at having to face a class at all. The project went to pieces with adverse effects on the children and on relationships between school and college. The student was put off modern methods for the rest of her course.

- (ii) The more experienced student who was keen and capable but was confused because her tutors were clearly at variance. A fundamental rift existed between education staff and specialists. The Education lecturer was anxious to try a project, but the History and Geography and Biology tutors would not co-operate; indeed one of them went so far as to say to the student, 'It's a lot of rubbish but since Miss X. wants it done I suppose we must do it.' This conflict between figures in authority caused lack of confidence and conviction in an otherwise balanced student and rendered the method ineffective.
- (iii) The tutors concerned were in favour of activity methods and the students were prepared practically as well as theoretically. Within the college there was solidarity. But the school in which the experiment was to be tried out was suspicious both of the tutors—'theorists knowing nothing of real teaching'—and of the new techniques. The tutor in charge, feeling that the prestige of the New Education in this particular school would stand or fall by the result which her inexperienced students achieved, tended to become over-anxious, to worry the students, to be afraid to let them make mistakes and even to cause them to realize that she felt 'show' to be more important than sound achievement. The students resented being used in this way as guinea pigs, became friendly with the more reactionary members of the staff, valuing their opinions more than those of their tutors because after all the teachers were the people on the job. As a result, activity methods were carried out half-heartedly and failed.

- (iv) The children's attitude will greatly effect an inexperienced student. If he should teach in a school where a rigid external framework has been the rule, the children, always prone to take an advantage of students, will despise him for being weak when he initiates freer methods. The waste of time due to the transition may set him against the new methods. Only if he is a particularly mature and strong student will he realize that this is an inevitable reaction, and so have sufficient faith to persist until adjustment to the new atmosphere is secured.

- (v) The basic problem occurs in the case of the student who, though feeling it expedient to please his tutor, is not convinced in his own mind. After all, the old methods have justified themselves so far in his life; to them he owes his success at school. It is only to be expected that, once again in the school atmosphere, he will revert automatically to the techniques employed with such success on himself.

The conflict, of course, derives basically from the student's own lack of emotional maturity and particularly from his attitude to responsibility. Up to the present, unless he happens to have attended a school where progressive methods were employed, he has reason to distrust the willingness of human nature to work unless considerable external coercion is applied. The New Education implies a venture of faith that he is not prepared to make; after all, is he sure that he would work himself were it not for the fear of failing his Diploma? He has never experimented with these new incentives in his own case.

To summarize, the main obstacle to the growth of the New Education lies in its pioneer nature. Students, tutors and teachers are expected to put into practice methods and attitudes that they have not themselves experienced as pupils and therefore of whose value they are uncertain. The resultant lack of solidarity with regard to these methods and attitudes among school staff and college tutors causes lack of confidence and confusion among students in training. Further, most students, teachers, Heads of schools, tutors, Principals and Inspectors have not worked out intellectually, emotionally and socially the full implication of the basic principles of the New



Education. As well as being divided amongst each other they are divided within themselves. Children readily sense any division of loyalty, uncertainty, lack of responsibility or wholeheartedness in their teachers, and thus the methods fail. In reality it is the psychological climate that has failed. For if the staff of school or college are not living out the principles of the New Education in their individual and corporate lives, how can the pupils be expected to do so?

Psychological Climates favourable to the New Education

Of first significance is personal attitude. Children react less to what we say than to what we indicate by our total feeling and behaviour. The tutor or teacher should ask himself, 'Do I really believe in the principles that I am putting into practice, or have I some ulterior motive such as pleasing the Head, gaining promotion, and so on?' (Naturally, motives are usually mixed, but some conviction is advisable.) Next, 'Why do I believe in them? Is my belief a worked-out philosophy, clearly conceived intellectually and strongly supported by the impulse of healthy feelings, or am I driven to any extent by some inner compulsion to react against the repressive upbringing of my own youth?' (Again, few of us are entirely free from unconscious compulsions, but at least we should try to see them for what they are.) Useful questions for consideration are one's attitude to the nature of the individual, to 'original sin' and 'original goodness', to the whole issue of freedom and authority in education and to one's own particular aims in being a teacher. I do not suggest that an individual can come to any final decision on these matters; he will, we hope, always be growing and developing his ideas. He can well be in the position of keeping an open mind, experimenting with a new educational principle as a working hypothesis, unprejudiced and ready to be convinced by what he finds. Such an attitude works very well, for at least he will be facing the issues consciously and will accept responsibility for his own choice and actions. This mature outlook will give his pupils and colleagues an impression that he is rooted in himself and, while open to change and new ideas, he is not torn or crippled by unresolved inner conflicts.

Beyond the individual, the social group. If each member boldly thinks out his position in a

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mature way, the school staff will consist of a group of very diverse and independent individuals; the greater the variety in such a group the more difficult is the synthesis, yet if it is achieved the richer is the value of this co-operation. For the New Education to succeed, the members of this staff group should be sufficiently mature to respect and accept each other's differences as essential contributions to the whole. The children should feel, however dimly, that the parent-figures, even if different in skills and attitudes, are agreed on the fundamental principle of respect for the individual and are working together as a team. Further, the enlightened principles that are applied in the classroom should also hold good, allowing for differences of age and function, in the staff room. Above all, whatever attitude the Head takes to his staff, and the staff to him, will colour the whole psychological atmosphere and will percolate through to the youngest child.

Teacher Training and the New Education  
As far as teacher training is concerned, the



first need is clearly for quite fundamental staff discussion particularly between education lecturers and specialists. By working together in an 'education morning' or on a special project, and by creative 'democratic deliberation'<sup>1</sup> arising out of practical problems, destructive clashes in points of view can be resolved. Next, it is essential that students shall experience in a practical way in their own course the attitudes and techniques of the New Education.<sup>2</sup> Few will have attended schools at which progressive methods are in use. The majority, if they do not experience these methods during their training years, will go into teaching armed only with theory, afraid of practice. At the same time every opportunity should be taken to discuss the ideological issues involved, preferably each point as it arises, burning in the student's mind, from his painful or joyous experience. In this way, by the end of the course the student will have made at least some progress in sorting out for himself his educational philosophy and will know to a certain extent what he is doing and why he is doing it.

Perhaps the best way of linking this training with teaching is to attach the student to a good school in which experienced teachers are carrying out modern educational methods in a suitable atmosphere. In most infant and some junior schools this is a possibility, but there is a great scarcity of suitable schools in the secondary field, particularly among grammar schools.

A plan which has often been carried out successfully is to take a group of students into a secondary school in which the Head and staff are willing to co-operate with the tutor, interested in teacher training and not averse to experimenting with the new ideas. The following example is a composite one, but all incidents are true.

During the introductory fortnight of their course the students have had a taste of the New Education as applied to themselves and so are in a position to make some transfer to the school situation. For the rest of the first term a group of eight students with their tutor visit a co-educational secondary modern school for one day per week. In the mornings they have training in formal class teaching with the usual observation and criticism. In the afternoons they take another class of 48 pupils aged 14 for an informal project

on a local survey. Although for some purposes the class meets as a whole, for most of the time it is divided into groups, each group being responsible for one aspect of the work. On another day in the week 'method' discussion takes place, theory arising from practice.

From the beginning, differences are seen in the structure of groups. Student A is lecturing to his group at almost university standard; they sit rigidly in desks while he stands before them. Student B is clearly an individualist; her group is scarcely a group at all. Each child is in a different corner of the room working away on his own. Student C has established an easy, informal group atmosphere; clearly he is leading the boys and girls to take some responsibility for they are sitting round a table discussing their rôles in the work. D has not prepared anything and her group is bored and confused. E is an extremist who believes in following every interest of the individual irrespective of the purpose of the project. His children are reading comics. (E will only learn by experience.) F, G, and H have vanished on expeditions.

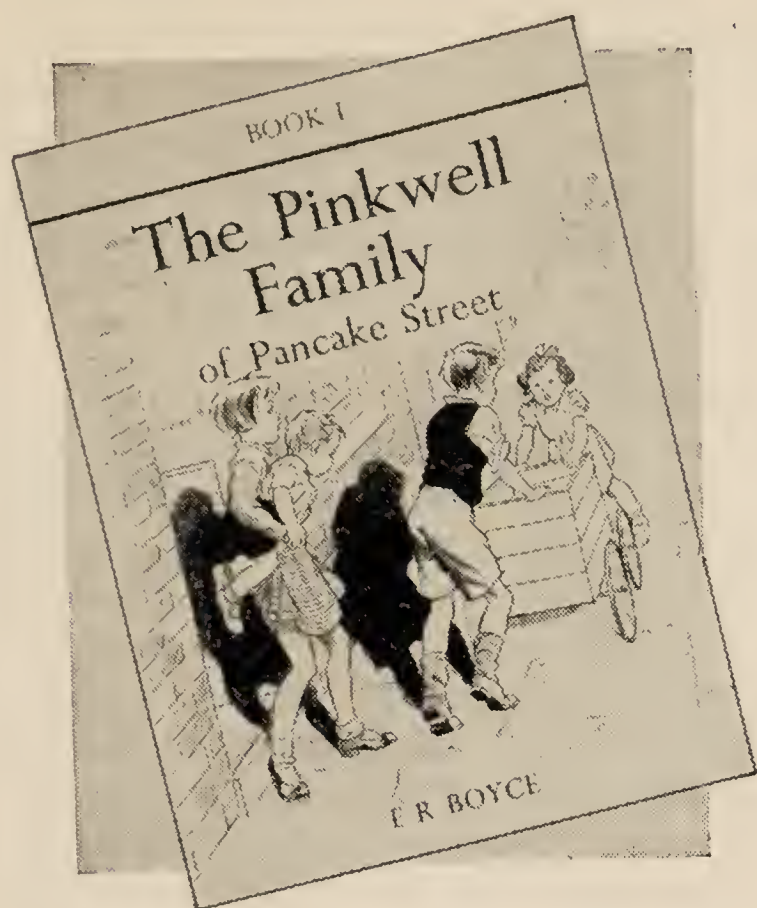
For the first week or so the students enjoy the freedom to experiment, but about the third week a reaction sets in and they turn on the tutor. 'What are we "supposed" to be doing? Where are we going? Are the children really learning anything or is this "degenerating into play"? Is it right that they should want to do things like drawing and making models instead of learning geography?' A and D (for different reasons) consider the project method a waste of time. Most of the others are in favour of it, realizing how much energy children will display when they are really interested, and how much they enjoy individual attention to their assignments and working in small groups. B, strongly opposed by A, raises the question of incentives, criticizing external sanctions and awards. E, whose group is by now completely out of hand, is somewhat subdued and wants to discuss the problem of discipline, particularly self-discipline. With very little effort on the part of the tutor the situation evokes all the major issues of educational relationships and principles; by pooling their experience the students teach each other far more effectively than the tutor could do by laying down the law. There is considerable heart-searching and application of the problems to their own lives. What is the difference between work and play?

<sup>1</sup> See K. D. Benne and B. Muntyan: *Human Relations in Curriculum Change*. New York, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> For details see M. Swainson: 'The Training of Teachers and their Mental Health,' *The New Era*, December 1952, p. 253.



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After this stage, much more co-operation is noticed between the students, and soon this applies also to the boys and girls who run from group to group for expert help, advice, co-ordination of information. As the work gathers momentum, and formerly difficult, bored children become alert and productive, the teachers grow interested, the students ask them for help and finally the survey widens into a co-operative effort involving many of the staff. Towards the end of the term discussions among students involve questions such as, 'What have we achieved and how did we do it? Have the pupils' attitudes to work changed? Have we changed in our attitudes to children, to the subject, to teaching?' The most convincing fact, of course, is that under proper psychological conditions the principles *work*, so that the faith necessary even to try out a hypothesis is justified.

By the end of the first term each student has come to some conclusion about the New Education in practice. He is then in a position to attempt something of the kind with a whole class on his own in his main school practice, making modifications in techniques to suit his particular temperament and interests.

### Conclusion

Teachers trained in this or in similar ways experience group activity in their own course, apply it to children, learn the value of co-operation and of mutual discussion of problems, and discover that the attitudes and techniques of the New Education, properly applied, do work. They have the opportunity to live out personally and to think out objectively some of the deeper principles involved and to relate these realistically to the theoretical part of their course on Educational Philosophy and Psychology. After this, they may deliberately decide to reject the New Education as unsuited to their particular temperaments, but if they choose to adopt it they will do so with considerable confidence, justified by experience, and above all with some backing of personal philosophy. They will then be in a better position to establish in classroom and staffroom that psychological climate in which the New Education can flourish.



# SELF-GOVERNMENT, STUDY AND CHOICE AT A SECONDARY MODERN SCHOOL

A. A. Bloom, Headmaster of St. George-in-the-East Secondary Modern School, Stepney, London, and  
Chairman of the English New Education Fellowship's Education Committee

OUR school was just about three years old when we were 'discovered' and I was asked to write some notes about it for *The New Era*. A month ago we celebrated our eighth birthday. During those intervening five years we have experimented much—in an environment like ours it is impossible to stand still—and although we have inevitably made mistakes, our School Pattern has grown clearer while remaining basically unaltered.

The education of the whole child leads to the freeing of the human personality and can no longer be considered an academic whim; it has been proved necessary by scientific discoveries about child development. The problem, however, is how, in the independent personalities so formed, to evoke the ability to co-operate and the readiness to meet the reasonable demands of society. We have never preached—or practised—*laissez-faire* at St. George. Rather have we set out to achieve a balance between personal growth and social needs. In the establishment of such a harmony lies the integration of the personality.

We have not deviated from this educational purpose. In our practice we have naturally changed, learning from our mistakes, from the accumulation of experiences and from the contributions members of staff have made, through their understanding of our purpose, to our combined thinking. (I am writing this article in the first person plural because once the School Pattern was established, all the planning within it has been the result of full staff consultation and agreement.)

Community has been described as 'the arena inside which the conflicts and accommodations of the individual with his fellows take place'. All the adjustments that take place will be personally and socially therapeutic if the atmosphere within the community is free from imposed fears (these, in schools, are generally, of authority, of punishment, of failure or the consequences of failure), if the climate is friendly, and if the children within the community can feel secure and appreciated. In such a milieu attitudes are educable through living experiences.

I propose to describe briefly three facets of our

life at St. George-in-the-East that evoke living experiences which tend towards progress in just human relations: our School Council, our School Study and our Elective Activities.

## The School Council

The Council consists of two panels—the staff panel which comprises all members of staff, and the pupils' panel which is made up of the Head Girl, the Head Boy, their Deputies, the Secretary, (all of whom are elected by the free vote of the children) and a Representative from each Form elected by the Form. Each panel meets separately once a week; the staff panel has its meeting every Monday at lunchtime, and the pupils' panel every Friday morning with the Head Girl and Head Boy alternately in the chair. This panel may consider all school matters; it receives reports from the Form Representatives, discusses business sent to it by the staff panel, makes new suggestions for action and appoints committees responsible for the running of various activities.

The Dance Committee is wholly responsible for the conduct of midday dancing in the Hall. The Meals' Committee runs the breaktime canteen and is largely concerned in the organization of school dinners. The Sports' Committees (one for the girls and one for the boys) organize playground games, arrange outside matches and look after sports equipment. The general appearance of the school is the concern of the Tidy Committee, while the Social Committee organizes our school concerts and parties and assists in the entertaining of our many visitors. A member of staff acts as a liaison on each committee.

Every Monday morning Form meetings are held to which the representatives bring back a report of the business done at the previous panel meeting, and at which school matters are discussed and, if need be, resolutions are passed to be dealt with at the following panel meeting.

On the last Friday of the month both panels meet, the chairmen of all committees also being present. Reports of the month's happenings are given by a member of staff for the staff panel and by the Head Girl or the Head Boy for the



pupils' panel. Reports are also received from the chairmen of committees. Recommendations made by these various interests are considered and, if not adopted, sent back for reconsideration. On the Monday following, a full school meeting is held at which all the reports are read and Council decisions put up for acceptance. Always there is lively discussion, with, now and again, the defeat of the Council. This full meeting is presided over alternately by a member of staff and by a member of the pupils' panel agreed upon at the previous School Council meeting.

A constitution has been drawn up and accepted by the school. In it I have the power of veto over any decision made by the Council, (I require this power since I am responsible to an outside body for the running of the school) but I am required to explain to an extraordinary meeting of the School Council the reason for my use of it. So far the occasion has not arisen.

It will be seen that we, as *teachers*, have very little power. Nor do we need it. We are, by the nature of our work, in authority. Our School Council prevents us from being authoritarian. A large part of the school organization is in the hands of the children themselves, and the value of the experiences afforded by the School Council in responsible, democratic and constructive living is great. To the children the school becomes *our* school with a consequent enrichment of community feeling.

### The School Study

Looking for activities that are in harmony with the school pattern, we have tried out projects, centres of interest, social studies. We have used them individually, in small groups and as Form studies. After wide experience we have come to the conclusion that, for us, the most effective learning is achieved and the keenest interest maintained through what we now call our School Study. To give full scope to the variety of interests among the children the theme for such a study must take the whole world for its parish—in space and in time. During the year ended last July our school theme was, *Man's Dependence on Man*. The theme was agreed upon in staff consultation and analysed thus: Man the Communicator, Man the Healer, Man the Producer, Man the Law-maker, Man the Artist, Man the Wearer of Clothes, and Man the Builder. Each Form took one of these facets as its own theme, and divided

it up into group topics. The children worked in these varying self-chosen groups, making their notes, building charts, paying their visits, while the teacher proceeded with them as co-adventurer, stimulating them and acting as their ever-present help. The relationship between teacher and group is a powerful influence in the development of this study, and in sustaining the interest until the work becomes almost self-motivating.

Once a fortnight the school met in the Hall to receive reports from children in each Form on the progress being made in the study, a member of staff taking the chair. In this way the school was kept informed of the all-round growth of the study, and interest in it was still further aroused. It was gratifying to note how these reports developed in length and in content, and how illustrative material was used to good effect.

In the alternate weeks I invited a speaker to address the whole school on a topic relevant to the School Theme. During this hour the staff went into consultation, discussing the progress of the study generally, working out further methods of reporting and exchanging ideas for development. The minutes kept of these meetings I consider extremely valuable. They show that the staff had reached a fine understanding in relations and were increasingly able to take criticism from each other objectively.

The year's study culminated in a School Conference conceived and arranged entirely by the staff. I was asked to take the chair and I introduced the subject of conference. Then each Form teacher in turn resumed the work done in that Form in connection with the School Study. There followed the showing of Paul Rotha's film, *The World is Rich*, which exemplified dramatically our theme. After Break, groups previously arranged in cross sections of the whole school met for discussion of the Theme and of the film. The children returned to the Hall when a representative from each group reported the trend of discussion. I summed up conference and brought the proceedings to a close. That the children were able to respond in the way they did was as satisfying as was the conclusion that the School Study had so justified itself.

Our theme for this year is, *The Brotherhood of Man*, to show how Man has grown to become a social being. This time we began with a conference to arouse interest and to deal collectively with Pre-history; we hope to end with another.



Of course, in this kind—and method—of study there will be many gaps in the child's knowledge. But, as Henry Adam said, 'What one knows is, in youth, of little moment; they know enough who know how to learn.' 'What is important,' says Martin Buber, 'is that by one's own intensely experienced action something arises that was not there before.' Our experience lets us believe that from our approach to the School Study the following values emerge:

Curiosity and Thought are aroused.

By learning how to satisfy this curiosity children learn how to learn (through books, visits, interviews, chats, and so on).

The living experience of group working is vital to the promotion of just human relations.

Understanding rather than knowledge-collecting is achieved.

The skills of communication are sharpened in purposeful situations.

The order in which I have set down these values may be questioned, especially since we hold that without the skills of communication full living in a community is not possible; yet the order is not haphazard. These skills are practised and developed within the continuous working of the School Study, and the children's growing interest in the study encourages still further their progress in the skills. The notebooks and charts produced by the fourth year groups would convince even those who would reverse my order of values.

### Elective Activities

Our School Study, with all the search for information it entails, takes up most of each morning. To our Elective Activities we give four afternoons a week. (We have to omit Thursdays when most of us go to the playing fields at New Eltham; but this activity, also, is elective!) As the name implies the children make up their own afternoon time-table. This is our procedure:

The children are told the activities which the teachers are able to offer them. The Form teachers, in private interview, ask their children individually to select about eight in order of preference. The combined choices of the school are collated, and, from the needs expressed, a time-table is drawn up offering various activities before Break, and another set after Break. Some are repeated many times during the week. As far as is possible every child is given his choices. The work of fair allocation of these choices is

long and arduous for the staff, but its agreed justification is felt to be adequate compensation.

But, despite all this careful preparation, it may happen that there is a greater demand for a particular activity than can be met, or that two of John's choices fall at the same time. It also may happen that we cannot supply the activity Mary had opted for on the day when she is free, and that she does not want any of the activities that are available. These are all honest difficulties which we make honest attempts to solve. For the sundry Johns and Marys we have, for each period, a 'Non-groupers' Group, whose few members we hope either to be able to absorb in one of the existing groups or to include in a new activity. The point to note is that these are *elective* activities and no child is put into a group against his desire.

While we do not wish unduly to influence any child in making his choices, the teacher does seek to guide him and to help him to as wide a selection of activities as it is felt he can compass.

Here is the list of activities—it will be seen that most of them are creative—Art, Bookbinding, Creative Writing, Debate, Drama, Dramatic Reading, Fabric Printing, French, Housecraft, Italic Writing, Literature, Music, Mythology, Needlecraft, Pottery, Puppetry, Recorder Playing, Weaving, What's On?, Woodwork. At the children's own request we have instituted a Maths. group for those who wanted additional practice, and a Special Reading group for the retarded readers.

Need one elaborate the value and the joy of these afternoons? Groups which are cross-sections of the school, meeting for their self-chosen activities, purposefully employed. Through the abundance of their creative experiences the children find an emotional release in an atmosphere that is *sympaticos*. And always with them rests the satisfaction that they, *they* have made the choice.

Having to make a choice is an emotional and an intellectual experience of deep significance. Our children are presented with this demand in many situations—they choose much of the work included in their School Study; they select their afternoon time-table; they have wide freedom to arrange their comings and goings throughout the day. But what of the motivations that impel them to make a particular choice or to refrain from a proffered activity?



I have noted six reasons, any one or more of which are present when a child makes his decision. He may like the subject; he may feel that he needs it; he may wish to be with a particular teacher; he may wish to join his friends; he may decide that the activity chosen will make least demands upon him; and he may, consciously, have no preference at all.

The reasons that may lead him not to choose a certain activity are no less valid. He may feel an antipathy to the subject; he may dislike the teacher who takes it; he may feel an inability to 'do' the work and so dares not face the prospect of failure; he may have tried and failed; he may have had enough of that activity and wish to explore further; he may wish to give others a chance.

When, therefore, we seek to guide the child in his choosings we are sympathetically aware of these many possible motives. We have sought to make simpler the act of choosing by providing 'sample' lessons and activities, so that he might have, at least, actual knowledge to guide his choice. As time goes on and our children learn from their experiences we notice that their choices

are becoming more realistic, and, selecting the work they *want* to do, they are prepared to overcome the obstacles to achievement. Herein lies, in part, the answer to those people who would ask, 'If they are only doing what they like how will they be able to face difficulties in their work when they leave school?'

I have described three facets of life at St. George. It must be remembered that these—and all our other activities—are but means. The School Pattern constitutes our design for living, and everything that happens makes a contribution to it. 'Until the entire school curriculum is consciously designed to contribute to the development of democratic concepts, and all other purposes are part of this major purpose, we will have failed to assume the responsibility that is ours.'<sup>1</sup> We subscribe to this assertion, but would stress that the foundation of all democratic concepts is the belief in the uniqueness of the human personality, with, as a corollary, the right of the individual person to harmonious growth in his community.

<sup>1</sup> M. Lindsay: *Childhood Education*.

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# VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN A RESIDENTIAL COURSE

*Phyllis Broyd, Deputy Youth Employment Officer, County Borough of East Ham*

EARLY in 1952, a fortnight's residential course for a group of fourteen-year-old school girls was run by the East Ham Education Committee. Known as 'Operation Shoehorn', the course was held at Debden House in Epping Forest and was an attempt to prepare the girls for the transition from school to work. This experiment was encouraged by the Ince Report and subsequent re-organization of the Youth Employment Service under the Employment and Training Act 1948, which recognized the importance of vocational guidance and the possibilities of research and experiment in this field by local education authorities.

Entry into the adult world of work is often abrupt, and young people have many adjustments to make to their new environment with its different system of values and behaviour. Life is no longer sheltered, and the girl who sets forth proudly in her new status of wage earner is often disillusioned on finding herself with an insignificant rôle in a complex organization. Preparation for vocational guidance and work is, of course, an important function of the Youth Employment Service and is carried out by means of careers talks and possibly films in the schools, and visits by parties of school-leavers to a selection of local firms. These methods suffer from two main limitations: (1) it may not be possible to describe or visit a *representative* range of jobs when the school time-table is already overcrowded; (2) the young person plays the passive part of listener and onlooker in these situations and may be left with an unrealistic conception of the world of work. In the residential course it was possible to present a balanced picture of industry with ample opportunity for discussing the different jobs, and the girls were also able to gain first hand experience in a 'live' situation at work.

These conditions also enabled the youth employment officer to make a more appreciative assessment of the youngster's abilities, aptitudes and temperament than is possible in the normal way at the short individual interview. The matching of the school-leaver's personality and the job is no easy task where the service is comprehensive and large numbers have to be dealt with. The time factor is at present a serious

limit to the degree of investigation into the child's potentialities, especially where there are prior problems of maladjustment within the family or school.

The aims of the course, therefore, were three-fold:

1. To enable the girls to learn more about the jobs and personal relationships at work;
2. To develop the relationship of confidence and co-operation between the youth employment officer and the girls, upon which depends the success of guidance, placing and after-care;
3. To obtain an impression of the attitude to work of these girls, their hopes, fears and expectations.

The course was run on similar lines to the first experiment in 1951 by Mr. H. Z. Hoxter<sup>1</sup> for a small group of secondary modern school boys. Using the experience gained, a few important changes were made for the second course in selection, programme, staffing and use of questionnaires. Whereas the boys had all come from the same school and neighbourhood and represented a cross-section of ability, four or five girls were drawn from each of the four secondary modern schools in different parts of East Ham, so that new contacts had to be made from the start. With the exception of one school which was unable to release pupils from its top form, the girls came from the two top streams of their schools. It was intended that each should be an elected representative of her school, responsible for telling the rest what she had learnt during the fortnight. In this way it was hoped that the course, inevitably restricted in numbers, would have the widest possible influence. A nominal charge of 12s. per week was made.

The programme was planned and run by the Youth Employment Service with the collaboration of outside specialists. Voluntary organizations such as the Young Women's Christian Association, the Youth Hostels Association, the Central Council for Physical Recreation, the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers, the Women's Services, and industry supplied speakers, while the Loughton Rotary Club and

<sup>1</sup> *Psychology at Work*, August, 1951.



local firms made it possible for the girls to try out different jobs for themselves. Social science students from the South-West Essex Technical College and Bedford College for Women gained practical experience through acting as group tutors. For the successful organization of the scheme, co-operation with many departments of the local authority was indispensable. Data about the intelligence and health of the participants was provided by the educational psychologist and the school medical officer, and head teachers gave estimates of each girl's general ability.

The eighteen girls were divided into three groups, each with a tutor who was able to guide discussions and help the girls in their understanding of the lectures. The easy relationships established in these small groups enabled the tutors to draw out those girls who tended to be retiring and passive at the beginning, while those who monopolized the discussion learned to listen to the points of view of other people. Friendly inter-group rivalry was encouraged by awarding points for dormitory inspection, efficiency in performing waiting and washing-up duties, for questions after lectures, success in netball matches, the treasure hunt and the scavenger hunt. Two members from each group were elected to a central committee which made many decisions affecting the daily programme and the distribution of various tasks.

The programme itself was naturally arranged with a view to the special needs and interests of girls, but in contrast to the boys' course, there was no sharp separation of those aspects of the course concerned with personal relationships and developing the right attitude to work (*i.e.* 'adjustment'), and those giving a picture of different occupations and their requirements and conditions (*i.e.* 'induction'). This enabled a good balance to be struck between lectures, visits, actual job experience, films and leisure pursuits. The following summary indicates the range of topics and activities covered:

1. Local background and industries.
2. *Occupations*—in offices, shops, hospitals, nurseries, laundries, Women's Services, needle trades, hairdressing, domestic service.
3. *Relationships at work*—'fellow-workers'; charge-hand; Works Manager; Shop Steward; Trades Unions; Personnel Officer.
4. *Personal problems*—including discussion of boy-friends and marriage; budgeting; planning and saving for holidays.

5. *Personal Care*—'grooming'; dress; care of skin and hair; suitability of appearance for work.

6. *Use of leisure*—crafts; dancing; drama; appreciation of music; singing; table tennis; exploring the countryside.

Despite the very full programme, enthusiasm was maintained at a high level throughout the course, largely due to the intrinsic interest of the activities and to the policy of alternating different *types* of talks with visits, other outdoor activities and leisure pursuits. When sessions were taken by resident staff it was possible to introduce some flexibility into the time-table where the pace seemed too fast. In the free time that was available the girls proved that they could well entertain themselves without supervision.

### Induction

The purpose of the East Ham residential course was to give young people a foretaste of working life. With the collaboration of the Rotary Club and the employers of Loughton (a town some two miles from Debden House), each of the girls tried out two different jobs, one in the work of her choice and the other decided by the youth employment officer as a contrast. As fourteen of the eighteen girls wished to take up some form of office work, they spent their second working day in either a shop, a day nursery, or a workroom. On the eve of the first day at work, the girls wrote essays describing what they expected or hoped would happen, and afterwards they gave a brief account of their actual experiences. The discrepancy between the two was not so great as with the boys. Nearly all assumed that they would be excited or nervous when they set out, but they were looking forward to 'work' as an adventure. The more intelligent girls tended to be more realistic in their expectations of the job and the conditions of work, but all attached great importance to establishing friendly relations with others; in two cases apprehension was expressed lest work-mates might be hostile. As regards people in authority, friendly and considerate treatment was looked for, no doubt expressing the adolescent need for recognition of their personal status and significance.

Their simple and circumstantial accounts showed that most of the girls enjoyed both their jobs, had good relationships with other employees, and made useful observations as to new processes or technical terms. Moreover, these reports also



showed with what kindness and care the different employers received their visitors, greater perhaps than would normally be possible in the case of every new entrant to a firm. The girls were introduced to as many aspects of the work as possible and little 'output' was expected from them. This experience underlines the fact that successful adaptation depends to a large extent upon a sympathetic understanding by employers of the psychological needs of a youngster making her first break from school.

### Attitude to Work—'Twenty Questions'

At the beginning of the course the girls completed a questionnaire intended to start them thinking about the changes in their status that would occur when they began to earn their living. Twenty different situations were presented each dealing with an aspect of their new relationships with superiors, equals and inferiors (if any) at work, and the possibly changed relationships with families at home. The following are typical of the questions asked:

If you were in charge of some people on a job and they were slacking, would you

- (a) Order them to get on with it? (6)
- (b) Point out that if they did not get on with it you yourself would get into trouble? (9)
- (c) Report them to a superior? (0)
- (d) Pretend not to notice and do it yourself? (1)
- (e) ? (2 gave independent courses of action).

If you were dissatisfied with something at work (pay, hours, conditions, etc.), would you

- (a) Report it to your Trade Union representative? (6)
- (b) Complain to the manager? (2)
- (c) Say nothing? (0)
- (d) Look for another job? (1)
- (e) Put it to your fellow workers and try to make them act together to improve things? (9)
- (f) ? (0)

What do you expect rises in pay to depend upon mostly?

- (a) Length of time you have been on the job? (4)
- (b) Skill? (8)
- (c) Passing exams? (1)
- (d) Changing jobs? (0)
- (e) Trade Union activity? (2)
- (f) ? (3)

When you start work, do you expect to

- (a) Hand over all your pay to your parents and receive pocket money? (9)
- (b) Pay your parents a sum for board and lodging and keep the rest? (7)
- (c) ? (2—'Consider suggestion made by parents; make a mutual agreement').

Other situations included reactions to unjustified reprimand, expectations about how they would learn the job; what they considered promotion should depend upon, and whether they valued interest, high pay or security most in choosing their job. As regards relationships at home, the

questions aimed at eliciting the degree of parental authority and guidance in such matters as choice of clothes, friends and spare time activities, the time they returned home at night and the amount and type of help they would be expected to give at home.

In order to obtain an idea of the range of occupations known to the girls, that is, their 'frame of reference', they were asked to write down as many occupations as they could think of in fifteen minutes, and to state their first and second preferences. Allowance had to be made in totalling for cases of duplication where the same job had been listed more than once under a different name. The marks thus obtained were between 19 and 59, and on the surface there appeared to be some high scoring on the part of the less able girls. Examination showed, however, that this was due to separate entries for the male and female counterparts in the same occupation and for a variety of types within the same general occupations. When these factors had been taken into account, an analysis of the scores revealed a close correlation with each girl's level of general ability.

The jobs listed were classified into broad groups, for each of which a frequency distribution was made to show the types of work with which the girls were most familiar. These were clearly related to their personal experience and the occupational class of their parents. In the professional group, most of the occupations were listed by one or two only of the eighteen girls, with the exception of teachers, doctors and opticians, who were mentioned by 15, 9 and 8 of the girls respectively. Spelling sometimes presented difficulties (for example 'sachiatryst').

The relationships of the girls to one another were examined at the end of the course when they had had ample opportunity to get to know the other course-members really well. They were asked to say which of the girls on the course they would most like to work with when the time came for them to leave school, and, to give the question meaning, they were told that their expressed choice would be taken into consideration. A diagram showing the inter-relationships which emerged is given below. From this it is possible to analyse each girl's position and status within the group, with respect to work. (This pattern would no doubt vary if some other criterion were used, such as sharing leisure, sitting together at meals, performing waiting and other duties.)



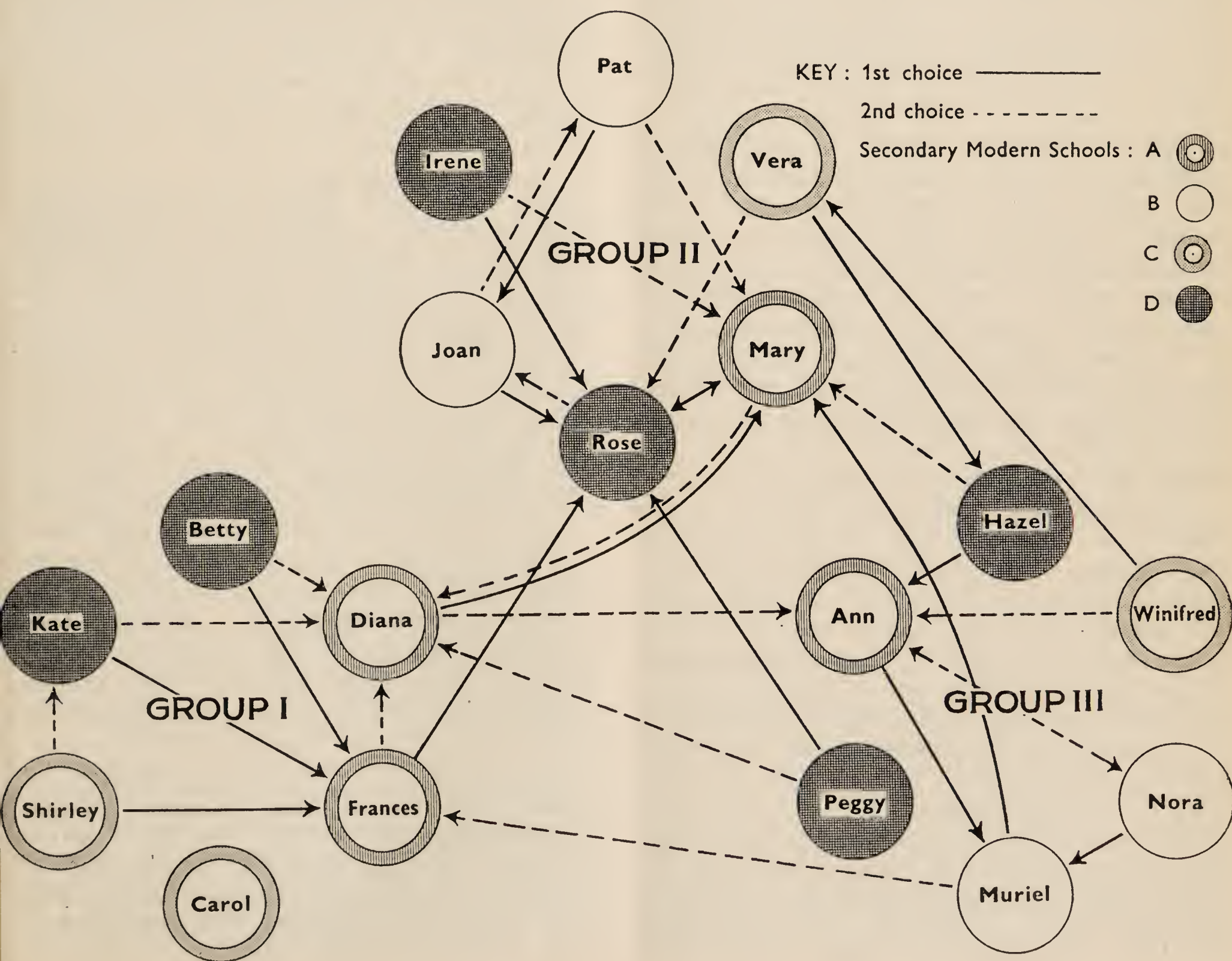
Some idea of the extent to which new friendships were formed between girls from different schools and neighbourhoods was obtained, and with a knowledge of the personality traits of each girl and of the interests and values of the group as a whole, an approach can be made to determining the reasons for these patterns of attraction and rejection. This would be particularly useful in the case of the girls who are not chosen as work companions ('isolates'), girls who choose each other ('mutual choices'), and girls who do not choose the person by whom they are chosen ('non-reciprocated choices'). Study of these might make it possible to help them to adjust more adequately to other adolescents and to the general social life at work. The girls with the greatest number of choices were in each case among the most intelligent (as shown by I.Q. and school record) and had high ratings for leadership qualities. Their fathers were in positions of

greater responsibility than those of the rest of the group (Merchant Navy Officer, private caterer, policeman, Manager of firm of coke specialists, and grocer).

### Adjustment to Changed Environment

The advantages of a residential course from a broad educational point of view are immediately apparent. Apart from the excellent training in community life, the course at Debden provided new contacts both with contemporaries and with adults from many walks of life. For most of the girls it was their first break from home and family. Many remarked upon the high standards of comfort both as regards accommodation in the lovely country house and the quality of the meals provided.

Informal methods of teaching and ease of contact with the staff were possible with this





small group. The educational value of this situation does not need emphasis, but the girls also were consciously appreciative of its advantages. The meeting with speakers of varied experience and background, the visits to the hospital training centre, bakery, laundry and child welfare centre, and two days spent in different jobs, all served to widen the girls' horizons.

These factors all combined to further the girls' personal and social development. It is hoped that the introduction to so much that was new helped to foster their powers of observation and strengthen their self-confidence.

### Vocational Guidance and Placing

No attempt was made to include vocational guidance interviews in the residential course. As time was limited, it was considered more desirable to get to know the girls individually by joining in their activities and to use this close contact with them in all situations as a basis for tentative assessments of their vocational possibilities. Impressions were discussed with the group tutors and the hostess of Debden house and a picture emerged of such personal qualities as initiative, leadership, sense of responsibility, sociability, co-operation and social balance with both adults and contemporaries, all of which would be relevant in their working life. Other information was available about their position in family, whether or not their mothers worked, the nature of their spare-time hobbies and activities, so that much material had been amassed by the time the school-leaving interviews took place. About half the girls left school at the end of the Spring Term, 1952, and most of the others left at the end of the Summer Term.

The confidential reports completed by the schools for each school-leaver were based on daily contact with the girls over a period of four years or more, and so provided a valuable check and supplement to the earlier assessment of the youth employment officer. These reports covered health, general ability, educational attainments and special aptitudes, with further information as to character at the discretion of the head-mistress who, together with the parents, was present at the interview.

The notes which follow about a few of the girls on the course may give some idea of the value of the experiment both to the youth employment officer and to the girl, particularly where the girl's own initial choice seemed unwise.

*Carol* was a big girl, overweight, with a poor complexion. Her level of ability in all respects was below average and she seemed to lack the vitality for sustained interest or effort. Although good natured and easy-going, she had a negative personality and did not make friends easily. She was dependant on others and quite content to follow the crowd. Her aim when she came to Debden had been to obtain work as a nursery nurse and it was arranged for her to spend one day in a day nursery. She expressed surprise afterwards that so much hard work was involved and, on learning that she would have to study for examinations, decided that work with children would not really 'suit' her. She enjoyed her second day at a grocery store, but again thought it was hard work. From her description of these experiences it seemed that she was unsuited for work involving direct contacts with people, either as a nursery assistant or saleswoman, since she lacked the interest in others, the patience, and the vitality required. Carol had no hobbies and admitted to only one interest — the cinema, on which she spent her weekly 6s. pocket money. At the school-leaving interview Carol seemed to be mainly concerned with her probable earnings, but had made up her mind that she wanted a practical job. Her mother appeared very care-worn with the burden of bringing up a large family and complained that Carol was a lazy girl who always dodged lending a hand with the housework. Practical work which would not prove physically tiring and which offered good prospects after training was recommended for this girl (for instance book-binding or leatherwork), but in the event she found her own job in the packing department of a firm of sweet manufacturers. Although this is purely routine, unskilled work, Carol seems to have settled down to it contentedly.

*Joan* was quite an able girl who was not using her ability to the full at the time of the Debden course. She was generally a disturbing factor during the first week, irresponsible and unco-operative in her group, inattentive at lectures, and almost indifferent in her attitude. Her behaviour was designed to draw attention to herself — she was faddy with her food, had to be pressed to participate in discussions. During the drama session, however, when she was at last persuaded to join in, she went to the other extreme and was an exhibitionist. It was felt that a firm talk from the youth employment officer was necessary by the end of the week to prevent her disrupting the group. The suggestion that another girl might take her place if she was not enjoying the course or deriving anything from it had the desired effect, and during the remainder of the fortnight she was much more anxious to please and to enter into the spirit of the course. Joan wished to take up shorthand-typing, which she had begun to learn at school. She had a good command of English and could write quite fluently when she tried. Apart from her need for further training for the type of work she had chosen, further education was desirable in this case in view of Joan's immaturity and instability. She did in fact remain at school until Christmas, 1952, when she was placed as a junior shorthand-typist in the City.

*Ann* was a tall, slim girl with a very attractive appearance and personality. She was above average in ability and had, in fact, only just missed selection for the grammar school at the age of 11. She was an only child and had a good home background. Her leadership qualities were soon apparent at Debden, where her maturity, self-reliance and initiative enabled her to mix easily with the other girls and with adults. She had obvious musical talent and had passed several examinations in piano playing, but realized that she was not of



concert pianist calibre. She had sensibly decided to train in shorthand-typing, with a view to becoming a private secretary later, keeping her music for a hobby. Her working experience at Debden with a firm of solicitors and in a drapery store was most successful. Ann learned a great deal and enjoyed both days, and the employers commented favourably on her ability, good sense and charming manner.

*Shirley* was below average in academic ability. She was well-grown. Compared with the other girls, and indeed judged by any standards, she had a great deal of pocket money (15s. or more every week) which she spent mainly on skating. Although co-operative at Debden, she had very little influence with the other girls and for the most part was left to her own resources. She was inclined to be boastful about her superiority in material things, such as her weekly allowance and her clothes. This, however, was probably to compensate for her lack of ability compared with other members of the group. She was very interested in craft-work, and was the only girl who freely took up lampshade or rug-making whenever an opportunity occurred.

At Debden she spent one day on assembly work in a firm making television parts and did quite well, although she hastened to assure everyone that she 'would never work in a factory' from choice. The staff of the hair-dressing salon with whom she spent her second day were not very impressed with Shirley. However, this was probably because they were very busy at the time, and as Shirley was a well-mannered girl she felt rather in the way and did not push herself to the fore. At the school-leaving interview her mother said that they had discussed the choice of work but Shirley's enthusiasms waxed and waned so much that she would leave her entirely free to choose. Shirley was not interested in dressmaking or tailoring or millinery and said again that she would not consider any practical occupation which involved working in a factory. She was advised against nursery nursing since a long training and study for examinations was entailed and in any case the future prospects were rather uncertain. Shirley came from a good home and had an intelligent mother. Thus, although she lacked academic ability, she did have good manners and standards and was well-spoken. It was therefore felt that she would be far better in a job requiring good appearance rather than initiative. Accordingly she was advised to take up saleswork, perhaps in the toy department of a large store, or in a dress shop. She was eventually found an excellent opening in a good class dress shop as a trainee saleswoman. She has settled down most satisfactorily and the manageress speaks very highly of her good manners, willingness and obvious interest in the work.

*Betty* was a girl of average ability with a marked practical aptitude, a very cheerful disposition and a delightful manner. She was a good mixer, always eager and willing to help, and showed a great deal of patience and perseverance. At school she was in a class with a bias to dressmaking. Her English, both written and spoken, however, was very weak and her accent poor. Nevertheless, at the time of the Debden course she had set her heart on becoming a G.P.O. telephonist. It was arranged for her to spend one day at a firm of chartered accountants, working with the switchboard operator. She was completely fascinated by the experience and gave a full and enthusiastic account in her essay afterwards, expressing disappointment that she had not been allowed to 'work the telephones' herself! When the work was discussed with her, however, she agreed that she would not really be happy working all the time at an exchange dealing with people only indirectly.

The attraction of this work had worn off by the time of her interview in the summer, when she chose to take up nursery nursing. Betty seemed to be ideally suited for this, having the ability, the right temperament and personal balance. She was an older child in a large family herself, and the home was poor but loving. Employment was found for Betty as a student nursery nurse at a local day nursery which has facilities for her release on two days a week to attend the technical college in preparation for the examinations of the Nursery Nurses Examinations Board.

*Vera* was a small girl of average ability, rather immature for her age and somewhat scruffy in her personal appearance. Her general manner was quiet, modest and retiring, but she was gifted with an exceptionally good voice and when called upon to sing, would suddenly lose her shyness. Vera had had singing and dancing lessons for several years, belonged to a choir, and was encouraged by her parents to perform at local concerts. It was taken for granted that she should have a stage career. As a result she seemed in danger of over-taxing her voice, especially as she was already attempting the *colloratura* arias usually left for mature singers. This opinion was confirmed by the music specialist who visited Debden and gave Vera a private audition. Despite the warning againsts training her young voice, Vera's parents were determined to start her on a stage career as soon as possible. On leaving school at Easter, Vera obtained clerical work with a Buidling Society for a short period, but left this to join a musical show which opened at a West End Theatre in the autumn and promises to have a successful run.

In the foregoing notes on members of the group it is impossible to indicate *all* the factors taken into consideration when offering vocational guidance. Indeed, before advice can be given, the limitations of the work available in the area have to be accepted. Then, each individual presents a different combination of factors and circumstances; and while science and training indicate general principles of procedure for the advisor, the assessment made for each person is in a way intuitive, based upon experience. The youth employment officer, however, does have opportunities to review the initial assessment by follow-up methods. The youngsters are invited to an 'open evening' at the Youth Employment Bureau after they have been working about three months, and it is then possible to judge the degree of success in adjustment and progress. An open evening in the form of a tea party was held for the Debden girls at the end of October, and it was encouraging to find that all those working at the time had settled down happily in their respective jobs. However, the value of the residential course for vocational guidance purposes can only be assessed after a long period of careful follow-up of the careers of those taking part compared with those of members of control groups.



# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT ASKOV

THE 1953 International Conference of the New Education Fellowship was held at the Folk High School, Askov, Denmark, from the 2nd—16th August. There were 270 members present from 23 countries.

The main work of the Conference was done through practical work in the following groups: Astronomy, Mr. C. T. Daltry; Mathematics, M. Hardi Fischer; two groups of Mime and Drama, led respectively by M. August Bal and Miss Marjorie Frances; two Movement groups, led respectively by Mrs. Astrid Gøssel and Mrs. L. Langgaard assisted by Miss Wilma Koch; two Music groups—Mr. Bernhard Christensen with Dr. Sven Møller Kristensen, and Herr J. Wingensfeld; three Painting groups—Mrs. Jeannie Cannon, Mr. Rikard Sneum and Mrs. Ina van Blaaderen; two Pottery groups—Miss Seonaid Robertson and Mr. Richard Dunning; Le Texte Libre, M. Fernand Dubois; Free Discussion and Original Composition, Miss Marjorie Hourd; Interpretative Discussion, Mrs. L. Herbert; A Discussion on Tensions Between Groups, Miss Shanti Rangarao; Free Activity with Natural Materials, Fraulein L. Harder.

In the late afternoons, time was allowed for seminars which discussed such subjects as teacher-training, the education of non-academic adolescents, pre-school education, and the psychology of modern language teaching. There were lectures by Professor Dr. Flemming

Hvidberg, Minister of Education for Denmark, on 'The Danish Folk High School'; Dr. Ruth Froyland-Nielsen on 'The Mental Health of Teachers'; Mr. Martin Ennals of Unesco on Unesco's Gift Coupon Programme; Mr. C. T. Daltry on 'The Teaching of Mathematics'; Mr. Torben Gregersen on 'Freedom in the Schools in the 20's and Now'; and Mr. James Hemming on 'The Relationship between Modern Educational Principles and the Content of the Curriculum'.

The group technique employed in this Conference is familiar to readers of *The New Era*. It has been described in the issues of November, 1951 and April, 1953. This time we are publishing only the Chairman's main address—*The Philosophy of the New Education*—and the summary of the Group Leader's Reports by Miss Marjorie Hourd.

No one who attended the Conference will soon forget the warm-hearted and most considerate kindness of the Danes, nor the beauty of their country, as shewn in the ancient township of Ribe, the heather-clad slopes overlooking the chain of lakes near Silkeborg, the well-built farmsteads, and the closely cultivated fields. After the Conference many members enjoyed the further hospitality of the Danes in the beautiful city of Copenhagen, where an interesting programme of visits was arranged by Rebecca Rasmussen.

J. B. Annand

## THE TEACHER AND HIS WORK

A Summary of the Ideas behind the Group Work at the Askov Conference

M. I. Hourd, Author of 'The Education or the Poetic Spirit', 'Some Emotional Aspects of Learning'; Lecturer in Education at the University College of Exeter

THE aim of this summary is to trace as far as possible in so short a space the main principles underlying the group-work of the Conference. The way in which I present the pattern of thought that has emerged will necessarily be my own, but the material for the theme is derived from accounts given me by Group Leaders and from the Group reports.

First and foremost, there has been, as Dr. Zilliagus has already stated, an emphasis on the teacher as a person who can neither adjust himself to society nor educate and nourish children if he is himself a dissatisfied and unharmonious person. At the same time it has been the general experience that satisfaction and harmony were not to be had for the asking, nor

even for the praying, but by trial and error and by living through stages of anxiety and frustration until a strong enough design emerged for confidence to grow into achievement. The first crude shapes of pots—the faint charcoaled designs of the masks, the doodles and first experiments with colour and paint, clumsy unco-ordinated movements in mime and drama, tentative strivings to find words, and so on. Each person had to explore the medium of his chosen group until he began to recognize himself, his own stamp upon it.

However, this triumph over uncertainty was not the result of a solitary struggle. He was helped by the intuitive guidance of the leader and by the leader's knowledge and experience. He



was strengthened by his relationships within the group. The mark of originality was recognized in others, their uniqueness respected; so that in some indefinable way each member became aware that not only was he clay in his own hands, but that he was absorbing and being absorbed by shapes and forms within the group. This inter-action of the person and his material, of one person with another working with the same materials, revealed how, as individuality is gained and then recognized, the social unity of a group is strengthened, and yet the group itself plays an important part in this individual development. We have seen too that, as the first period of exploration moves into confident purpose, the work itself and the group relationships gain in complexity and richness.

The part played by techniques in this evolving process has varied from group to group, but the general tendency has been in the direction of subordinating them to the vitality of ideas. In fact, it would seem as though the recognition of the self took place at the same time as mastery over the material and that 'technique' is the name we give to the procedure by which this occurs. It is this 'marriage between imagination and the material' as Mr. Sneum calls it, that produces the integrity of a work of art and also its power to communicate. Miss Frances remarks that, unless self-realization takes place in the actor, the results are mimicry only, they would never arouse the passions in any deep and lasting sense. The potters say: 'It is simple; the pot cracks—it won't stay round. What feels good looks good—is good.' Mrs. Cannon says, 'unless the artist finds his centre within himself, he is as a tinkling cymbal'. Fraulein Harder has shown how, when natural materials are understood, they can take on tender, personal meanings which both bear the mark of their originator and also suggest the person to whom they might be given—the occasion they might celebrate. Mrs. van Blaaderen described the importance of putting pieces of oneself on the wall so that they would answer back and say: 'This is you'; so that people would look at them and say: 'It is he.' The children's poems that M. Dubois has been studying were the outcome of his intuitive understanding of children, and they communicate through their sincerity and originality. Failure in communication is due to a faulty union between form and meaning which has not taken

place happily because the true identity of the poet could not be recognized within it. These false notes are well described in the quatrain:

There are roses in it, and laughter,  
And the grand Old Testament ring,  
But the high gods know in a minute  
That it isn't the genuine thing.

We see then that the artist's understanding of his material is the result of a subtle union of himself with it, and that this is bound up with the problem of human relationships and social integration. We cannot pretend to have fathomed this amazingly complex inter-relation—in fact we might say that this conference is a piece of research work on this very problem. The Movement and Music groups have provided a most important contribution to this research in their exploration, in very different ways, of the body-mind relationship which is probably the key to the whole problem. But as I see it, we shall reach no solution if we claim for any one form of expression Messianic properties. To do this would be to avoid the wonderful complexity of human evolution.

We know that the glories of civilization have been won at the expense of much repression of individual needs and urges, and that tensions are to some extent an inevitable part of modern society. It has been the particular work of the three Interpretative Discussion groups to study these tensions in different ways and treat them from the psychological angle. Psychology is born out of the need to deal with the dilemma we have described. Miss Rangarao has looked upon the problems which arise between nations—which, as we have seen in Mr. Fisher's group, is also a mathematical one—and between groups with different cultural and economic backgrounds. She has looked at the tensions on a world stage which Mrs. Herbert has studied more closely and microscopically in the unconscious layers of personality, but with a practical application to classroom and here-and-now situations.

The interpretative work of both Mrs. Herbert's group and my own is built on the assumption, which is constantly being proved to be valid, that the acceptance of truth at unconscious levels has power to change and modify attitudes and behaviour. And yet the unresolved conflicts of human nature which find expression on a world stage, by a kind of backward movement have their effect upon the deeper struggles of the



human psyche—which in the first place brought them about. Thus a vicious circle is formed. By recognizing the close connection between individual vision and social integration, this conference has made a most courageous attempt to undo this vicious circle.

But life is not entirely a matter of social reactions or individual fulfilment through art. The universe has its own laws and is governed by forces, the nature and extent of which we are still but dimly aware. The imagination reaches out to those infinitudes and tries to make them finite through reason. The Mathematics and Astronomy groups have shown how, if these sciences are taught by creative teachers, they can, in Mr. Daltry's phrase 'nourish the well-springs of imagination'.

However, once we launch into a world of space and time, whether it is represented by the empty page and canvas or the crowded face of the sky, we become aware of our own insignificance—and aware that when we are out of step with time and space it is because we have not caught up with it in ourselves—and once more we are back

at the beginning. And time and space have been problems both spiritual and practical in this conference, which it would take another one to sift and understand. There is at the moment in this summary the danger of formulating ideas too soon, of pushing them into frameworks and leaving so much of significance outside. Moreover we are aware of what we have not touched upon within the conference and we may feel that, in spite of the abundance that surrounds us in the group findings, little has been achieved in proportion to the great task which a teacher attempts.

Dr. Ziliacus in the preceding article has traced the movement of educational ideas from adult-controlled classrooms to child-centred ones, and then to the New Education which this conference represents, where teachers and children have entered upon a curious and paradoxical relationship, for they stand in relation of adult and child and yet there is within the teacher an adult-child relationship, so that education becomes to adapt T. S. Eliot's phrase 'a common pursuit of liberation'.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### FRENCH-SPEAKING BELGIAN SECTION

Our programme during the first half of 1953, interesting though it was to a chosen few, did not do what it set out to do which was to awaken a mass interest in the New Education, and it induced only a small number of our members to take an active part in studying the most pressing educational problems of to-day.

This programme consisted of a three-day Study Course on the community-life of school children and the cultural relationships between secondary school teachers. There were also five meetings in schools of different kinds, in which the pupils participate actively in their own education, and three demonstrations by groups of teachers who are engaged in providing cultural activities for school children: La Chanterie de Bruxelles and Les Comédiens Normaliens.

This programme was given wide publicity and many invitations were sent out before each meeting. Apart from myself, whose only part was to draw together our findings at the final meeting, all the speakers were chosen from among the most qualified and best-known practitioners of educational techniques in French-speaking Belgium.

The reasons why this programme had so little success and the means which we must adopt in

order to remedy this state of affairs will be discussed by our Committee at its next few meetings.

The second part of the year was begun by our series of delegations. Mme Van Steenhuyse, our Secretary for the International Plan, took part in the Conference of Internationally-Minded Schools at Schloss Salen. The theme of the Conference was *International Understanding in Schools*. M. F. Dubois was a Group Leader at the Askov Conference and also took part in the French Section's Conference in Paris, and I myself had the honour of representing our Section at the Copenhagen meeting.

From September 3rd-13th we took part in *Journées de l'Enfance, de Jeunesse et de la Famille*, a profit-making exhibition organized at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels. More than 95,000 people paid for admission. Our stand, which was in a wing reserved for social work, was not elaborate. We had a chart, 5 metres by 180 metres, showing the geographical location of N.E.F. Sections all over the world, and a table 5 metres by 80 metres on which we displayed the volumes of the New Education Book Club, a collection of N.E.F. magazines, and the publications of our own Section. Many people asked us for information and we distributed 3,000



propaganda leaflets during the exhibition. I have as yet no information as to the practical outcome of this undertaking.

Early in October we had our Executive Committee meeting to work out our new programme up to December 1953. This will consist of a General Assembly, and three talks from our Section's delegates to meetings outside Belgium. From January 1954 onwards we shall be embarking on a programme based on recommendations from Copenhagen and Askov.

The New Education Book Club, in spite of all the efforts of our Secretary, M. Devaux, is not meeting with much success in our Section. Nevertheless, we shall continue our efforts, but the fact that the books are published in a foreign language is certainly the greatest obstacle to a wide membership in Belgium.

Our Section of the International Plan is at this moment assembling documents for an educational exhibition at Beyrouth in which the Belgian Section is taking part.

Our news and views continue to appear regularly in *La Revue Pédagogique*. Our financial situation is not rosy but we have no debt at the moment. I hope to be able to give you better news in my notes of April 1954.

H. BISCOMPTE, *Secretary*

### BOMBAY SECTION

On the 23rd July the N.E.F. organized a lecture by Mr. J. P. Naik on 'Rural Education'. Mr. M. T. Vyas, our Vice-President, presided over the meeting. Mr. Naik started by pointing out the history of Rural Education which under the British was totally neglected. He also pointed out many defects in the existing educational system which is predominantly organized for city dwellers. He therefore pleaded for a different kind of education for the rural areas. The emphasis, he said, must definitely be on the local environment and on the living conditions in the place in which the education is imparted. He therefore pleaded for the special training of teachers for rural areas. He also emphasized that the education should be through activities of the local places, and that children should be made fully acquainted with the flora and fauna of the place. Though he has accepted main prin-

*'Claud is frightfully choosy'*



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*and the choice is his*

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ciples of Basic Education, he has made a few changes enforced by the conditions of the place.

On the 26th September the N.E.F. invited Dr. B. V. Keskar, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, to meet the Executive Committee members of the N.E.F., The Bombay Headmasters' Association, The Secondary Teachers' Association. We placed before him certain suggestions with regard to Audio-Visual Aids in Education. We also requested him to produce educational films for children with the help of the film industry in India. We also proposed that the children's theatre movement be encouraged. Dr. Keskar in his reply assured us that his Ministry will do whatever possible in this matter. He also pointed out the difficulties of his Ministry but he assured us he will try to help educational institutions as much as possible. He promised to increase the number of school broadcasts through All India Radio. The meeting was a great success and the teachers and the Minister of Information and Broadcasting were able to exchange useful ideas.

The New Education Fellowship was At Home to the Fulbright Scholars going from India to America on the 13th August. Mr. Vyas, our Vice-President, talked to the Scholars, welcoming



such schemes of exchanging teachers between the countries as being very useful in bringing about international understanding.

From the Unesco Commission in India, there was a circular regarding History Text Books. Dr. K. C. Vyas, on behalf of the New Education Fellowship, sent the views as to what History text-books should contain. He emphasized that History text-books in India should be based on four principles: (1) tracing unity of India (2) stressing religious tolerance (i.e. the fact that frequently during the long history of India the State has been benevolently neutral towards different religions within its borders. For example, Ashok, who was a Buddhist, preached tolerance towards others and appointed as officers both Jains and Hindus; the Guptas, though Hindus, had officers who were Buddhists and Jains; and, during the Muslim period, Hindus and Muslims held posts without religious discrimination. Akbar's experiment in these matters is worth noting) (3) bringing about the principles of democracy, and (4) helping international understanding. He said that these principles should be able to create a healthy atmosphere among the students through the teaching of History.

K. C. VYAS, *Jt. Hon. Secretary*

### JOHANNESBURG GROUP

The chief interest of the Johannesburg Group of the New Education Fellowship over the last few months has been to explore the possibilities of holding an International Conference in South Africa. As such a scheme requires long term planning, attention has also been turned to individual lecture tours, which can be arranged more quickly and easily, in order to help in the important work of spreading new educational ideas. Providing difficulties in connection with shipping passages can be overcome, we are hoping to arrange for Mr. Donald McLean, of Australia, author of *Education of the Personality*, to pay us a visit next August and September.

Meanwhile in collaboration with the Division, of Adult Education (Department of Education, Arts and Science) we are in the middle of a valuable series of lectures on the Teaching of Languages by well-known local experts. Some of the titles of the lectures are: 'The Teaching of Afrikaans', 'The Teaching of English', 'Teaching the Teacher', 'Comics, Classics, Enid Blyton, or What?'

D. M. LUCKIN

### VICTORIA (AUSTRALIA) SECTION

*How Children Live and Learn in Victoria* was the title of an exhibition organized by this Section of the N.E.F. in March of this year. We would be

inclined to agree with the South African Section that exhibitions are not worth the money and energy, were it not for the fact that the exhibition, gathered together as it was by groups of people, gave to many an understanding of the worth of 'group experience' to the individual. This coincided with the growth of feeling that the monthly come-and-listen-go-away-till-next-time type of meeting was not satisfying the needs of most of our members.

As a result of these two things, we have since organized discussion groups and all-day conferences in place of regular monthly meetings. We feel very young in our efforts and cannot say with confidence that we have found the answer. We are enjoying the opportunity the discussion groups give us to discuss, think about, read about, the things we care about. We have not dispensed with speakers but have turned to experts only when we have a specific problem with which we want help. In this one aspect we feel confident we are on the right lines.

An interesting feature of our Section's activities is the high percentage of parents who have joined our organization and others who have asked us for help in forming parent groups for discussion along educational lines. We are confident that the more men and women, parents and teachers, one generation and another, people in one type of school and those in another, have the opportunity to come together and discuss problems, share new ideas, the greater hope there is for progress towards individual maturity and happiness. We are working towards providing these opportunities—not a spectacular ambition but one which has our heart in it.

We have recently provided the meeting facilities for the Australian Federal N.E.F. Council. Delegates from every State gathered here and we were happy to act as hosts and found the contact warming. We look forward to our regular lecture tour next year when we hear news of work and ideas in other lands.

From our corner in the South we use this opportunity of sending our greetings North, East and West.

NANCY SHERRARD

\* \* \*

In future, each issue of *The New Era* will contain reports from five or six of the National Sections of the New Education Fellowship, according to the following plan:

January and June.—Germany; Holland; Equador; New South Wales; Ceylon.

February and July.—England; Norway; Columbia; S. Australia, W. Australia; Australian Federal Council.

March and October.—Flemish Belgium; Scotland; Switzerland; N. Ireland; Queensland.

April and November.—French-speaking Belgium; India; S. Africa; France; Victoria.

May and December.—Denmark; Pakistan; U.S.A.; New Zealand; Tasmania.



## The Importance of Illiteracy. M. M. Lewis. (Harrap. 7/6).

Students of illiteracy to-day find a bulk of material challenging their study, likely to dishearten even the most voracious readers. Several standard works exist. A deep pile of research documents awaits their attention. Articles and monographs are legion. Few but the specialists can find time to travel the whole road. We have, accordingly, long been in need of a book which would provide a really sound background for understanding the contemporary problem of illiteracy without making heavy demands upon the reader. Dr. Lewis has now provided us with such a book. It has the added virtues that it is appetising and refreshing as well as being enlightening.

Dr. Lewis achieves his objective by setting the problem of illiteracy in its proper perspective—as an increasingly important aspect of personal and social life. This framework enables him to avoid all the dullness of more mechanical approaches. What he writes is vivid and satisfying because it is related to the living child and evolving society. In his initial statement of the problem, he writes:

‘When a child learns to read and write, almost anything that disturbs him as a person is likely to disturb him as a pupil.’  
That gives us the educational setting. He also writes:

‘The number of those who can remain outside the demands of literacy is rapidly becoming less; the area of the population impervious to the pressure of universal literacy is rapidly shrinking. Now if a society raises its standards of minimum literacy, and calls every one below this standard illiterate, it at once increases the number of illiterates.’

That gives us the social setting.

Thus armed with the right perspectives, we are equipped to see our way clearly, with Dr. Lewis as guide, through the ‘tangled skein of facts, distortions, prejudices and anxieties’ which to-day befog understanding of the nation’s problem of illiteracy.

Dr. Lewis devotes four chapters to examining the evidence that our standards have declined and to asking what the causes for such a decline may be, if it exists. History, we find, gives little support to those irate contemporary pessimists who delight in belabouring our schools for inefficiency in coping with the three R’s. ‘In 1874 only 25 per cent. of the children examined in the “standards” qualified for grant; in 1880 the percentage was no higher.’ Such laments follow hard upon each other as the years pass, with but brief intervals between them. The

## Book Reviews

H.M.S.O. publication of 1924, *The Teaching of English in England*, reports a witness as saying that, when boys came up to the Public Schools from the Preparatory Schools, it was ‘necessary to begin their English over again’. And yet Vernon and Watts found Burt’s Graded Word Reading Test of 1921 ‘almost certainly too lenient for 1939 standards’.

Gradually, under Dr. Lewis’s engrossing examination, the real situation emerges. People have got things the wrong way round. It is not that standards of literacy are constantly slumping but that society is constantly requiring higher average standards of literacy. Periodical panics are an inevitable feature of the slow progress towards building a fully literate nation in which ability is, for everyone, matched by attainment appropriate to the needs of his times.

Let it not be thought, however, that Dr. Lewis offers his analysis as an excuse for complacency. The fact that many critics of our current level of literacy have the facts distorted does not one whit reduce the reality of the problem we have to tackle. Rather does Dr. Lewis’s approach make the task of dealing competently with illiteracy even more urgent. Society has a threefold task:

To be in possession of adequate resources in the instruments of communication; to have effective mastery of them; and to ensure that

as many members of our society as possible shall be adequately equipped to make proper use of them.

We have to see the situation clearly: get the facts clear; get our aims clear. Once we have done that ‘methods and techniques will quickly be found’ because we are faced with the reality that we can no longer absorb illiterate persons in our society. We are under a social pressure to rescue the sub-literate person, ‘the person whose mastery of the means of communication is less than society requires of him’. We banish illiteracy for our age when we catch up educationally on the needs of our age. To do so is our inescapable responsibility.

The great virtue of this book is its combination of clarity and vision. It is an ideal introduction for the student; a first-class source of information for the inquiring teacher and citizen; and a stimulating restatement for those already deeply engaged in the problem.

James Hemming

## Our Times: A Social History, 1912-1952. Vivian Ogilvie. (Batsford, 21s.)

Here is a book both for the school library and for the Common Room bookshelves, a book too for reading at home. An ideal leaving present for the Six-former, who will, of course, have been unable to refrain from reading it first before the gift is made! The younger generation will find it a constant source of surprise and amusement, while it enables them to understand, in the full light of events, the otherwise inexplicable enthusiasms and antics of their parents. The older will find it impossible to read without breaking into the chuckles that accompany personal reminiscence, while it will administer a salutary corrective not only to nostalgic yearnings but also to smug and self-satisfied scorn of the days that are past.

Nor will the teacher find it less valuable as a short account of the development of modern society. It is hardly fair, of course, to compare the piquant wit of its author, and his obvious gifts as an expositor, with the massive knowledge and wide horizons of Trevelyan’s *Social History*. Nevertheless, it is in a sense a not unworthy popular continuation of that monumental work, though, differing in one important respect. Trevelyan’s pictures are glorious but static, and belong to the mental world of Edwardian days, when he first graced the History School at Cambridge. *Our Times* is modern in its dynamic character, portraying as it does a new social world which is still in the making. It contains no series of pictures but recounts how a new world—our ‘brave

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new world—came into existence, and tells of the moving spirits that formed it and of the way it struggled into birth.

And what a new world it is! Our times? Can 1912 be thought of as belonging to our times at all? . . . with its long days of leisure for the rich, its amateur cricket weeks and twelve-course dinners, while the bare-legged children of the poor disported themselves, shoeless, on the dirty pavements of the slumlands of our towns. . . How much has changed since then, the mental climate above all!

This book might well have been a mere catalogue of oddities and extravagances, a patch-work quilt containing all the queer doings and queerer clothes of our fathers and our mothers. It might have offered no more than an amusing retrospect of the follies and achievements of the past. In fact, it conveys, with fascinating art, the sound of the deep swell that lies beneath the peculiarities of our age, something of the compelling urge transforming modern life, that makes it possible for us to hope in the midst of so many reasons for despair.

In this respect the pictures, beautifully produced, always apt and often excruciatingly funny as they are, give a misleading impression of the whole. One would never guess from them how much sheer information, how many excellent summaries of recent developments in agriculture and industry, in social mechanisms and scientific thought, this volume of less than 250 pages contains. Its author, however, has introduced his information and his figures with the lightest of touches, showing himself a born teacher in his power of summarizing in telling phrases innumerable dry facts.

In anyone who has lived through this period the book must tend to produce an astonishing feeling of exhilaration. What fun it all was! How full have been these last forty years with the thrill and excitement of innovation! What a debt, too, we owe to the pioneers of science, to those daring rebels from whom we inherit our social freedom—the outrageous flappers and youths in Oxford bags who have become the sober founders of to-day's families of eager and healthy children with their unswathed limbs. Yet it warns us, too, how much there is still to win, how little progress there has been in that sphere which is life and death to us all—the sphere of morals and of the life of the spirit.

Wyatt Rawson

### **An Introduction to Jung's Psychology. Frieda Fordham. (Pelican. 2/-).**

In this interpretation of Jung's

many and varied sorties from the personal to the social, supra-personal and esoteric aspects of psychology, a definite order and coherence emerges. For the first time, the vaguely interested layman to whom most of Jung's own books remain closed, can feel at home, perhaps only as a visitor, in this unfamiliar world of archetypes and of the collective unconscious, because the guide is a welcoming and friendly one. Far from impressing us with obscure concepts and words of many syllables, she makes us partake of a feast of pleasant similes and analogies, taken from everyday life. We are neither pressed to swallow more than we can eat, nor are we threatened with starvation if we should dare to reject the whole or a part of what is offered.

This easy way to absorption should not blind us to the depth of the problems touched upon, and their profoundly stirring dynamism. Teachers will find much food for thought in the discussion of psychological types, their relationships to each other and the misunderstandings which may occur when they clash. The preference shown for the introverted type by Jung and many of his followers, leads to some simplifications which are not in keeping with the thoughtful approach of this book. When it is stated, as an example of extraversion, that the Freudian attitude to life is based on the belief that men are shaped by (early) environmental influences, few modern Freudians would agree to this sweeping pronouncement. Rather, one might find many in agreement with Jung's way of expressing the problem of adaptation: 'A man is not a machine who can continually and steadily adapt himself to his environment; he must also be in harmony with himself, i.e. adapt to his inner world and achieve unity within himself when he is also adapted to environmental conditions.'

It is certainly true that the language of psychology and of psychologists, far more than the ideas themselves, tend to divide more often than to unite. Those who prefer the more technical-sounding description—and let us not forget that it is a description of something basically unknowable—of the unconscious as a structure or mechanism, with its stages and defined periods of development, will not be attracted by the more poetic similes of the 'animus' and 'anima', of the 'shadow' and the 'wise old man'. Myth and legend will seem less real than instincts and complexes, though neither have ever been encountered in separation from their manifestations in life, open as these are to divergent

interpretation. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in reference to education and to the relationships between teachers and parents. In her last chapter, Frieda Fordham writes as a parent rather than as a psychologist, and with a parent's prejudices. Yet even this reinforces the point she is trying to make: that our own development never ceases, and that we must continue to learn. She quotes Jung: 'We educate people only to the point where they can earn a livelihood and marry, but then education ceases altogether, as though a complete mental equipment had been achieved. The solution of all the remaining complicated problems of life is left to the discretion and ignorance of the individual. Innumerable ill-advised and unhappy marriages, innumerable professional disappointments exist solely because of this lack of adult education. Vast numbers of men and women accordingly pass their entire lives in complete ignorance of the most important things.' Lest it be thought that here exhortation is meant to lead to Jungian analysis as the solution for all and every problem, this is far from being the case. Jung's ideas, many of which we are encountering in our experience, are being brought nearer to our understanding. Their use to us remains a question for our own 'personal' psychology.

Margot Hicklin

### **Asking Them Questions. A selection from the Three Stories edited by Ronald Selby Wright. (Oxford University Press. 8/6).**

'What is the Soul?'; 'Did not someone have to betray Jesus?'; 'How do consciences of Christians differ?' In this edition of *Asking Them Questions*, forty-three such penetrating theological and religious questions are discussed, with three to ten papers devoted to each subject. This compact volume will be welcomed by those already acquainted with the three original books, bearing the same title, from which these articles have been selected. Those to whom the series is new will be justified in thinking that a book which sets out to cover so much in so short a space must inevitably give glib answers to the unanswerable, and is likely to encourage the acceptance of 'clever solutions' to spiritual enigmas. A glance at the names of the contributors will, however, do much to alter such a judgment. The list is made up chiefly of scholars; it includes C. H. Dodd, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Monseigneur Ronald Knox, Edwyn Bevan, men who are the



established leaders of Christian thought in England to-day. A reading of the papers will show that the subjects are approached with the wisdom, humility and reverence we should expect from such contributors. The material is simply presented; when theological terms are used they are explained, either in the article or in the glossary.

Respect is shown for the intelligence, integrity and sincerity of the enquirer: sentimental evasion and unscholarly pretence are avoided. The approach of the writers may be summed up by the opening paragraph of the article entitled 'If God made everything, who made evil?' J. S. Martindale, S.J., writes: 'The question is an important one, so you will not expect the answer to be a cheap one, that you could rattle off in a line or two. We do not mean to shirk trying to give the answer as well as we can; and we can trust you to think it over as seriously as you can.' Intelligently used the book will provoke, not contentment with the superficial, but a desire to probe more deeply into Christian thought.

Ronald Selby Wright explains in his preface (an extract from the one to the first volume) how the series first came to be compiled. All the questions were originally asked by members of his Edinburgh Boys Club, who were all under eighteen at the time. Although the articles are primarily intended for those in their teens they will also guide and stimulate the thought and reading of older people.

*Asking Them Questions* shows the Christian Faith to be intelligible and rational, encourages the reader to love God with all his mind and also to realize that 'truth is not always comprehensible: many things may be seen through a glass darkly.'

Margaret W. Hunt

**The Teacher was Black.** H. E. O. James and Cora Tenen. (Heinemann, 10/6).

'Experience of the two nice Africans shattered the stereotype of the hostile and backward African savage and the belief that Negroes are fundamentally different from white people.'

Here we have the final judgment of this book on a sociological experiment which took place recently at a Secondary Modern School. The object was to discover what changes, if any, occurred in the attitudes of children towards an unfamiliar group by bringing them into personal contact with some of its members. Two young African school mistresses from the Gold Coast co-operated in this experiment and spent a fortnight teaching at the school. The techniques em-

ployed for measuring the attitudes of the children resulting from their new experience are described in the fullest detail. There were two interviews before and two after the visit, and every precaution was taken to see that their answers were free and spontaneous. Quite remarkable unanimity resulted both in regard to the children's opinion of the two Africans they had met and their changed attitude towards coloured groups generally. And what was in some ways more significant was the apparent permanence of the modifications once effected.

The whole of this study teems with interest and suggests the most exciting possibilities. Could the experiment be carried out on a much wider scale so that the youth of this country might be brought into early contact with people of many different cultures and racial origins? Would not this be the best method of banishing irrational prejudices and training young minds in international understanding and good will? On this, the main issue raised by this book, the authors have some very wise and salutary things to say. In the chapter on some educational implications they show how much depends on the quality of the people who are to meet and the character of the school life which they are called upon to share. From the very nature of things it is not possible for contacts with other peoples to be

greatly expanded. Therefore they recommend that there should be more effective teaching in the schools about the people of other countries and greater stress laid on resemblances rather than differences. In this way we shall perhaps help to foster broad human sympathies and clear ourselves of the imputation that 'England is the only country in the world where it is a crime to be a foreigner!'

A. I. Polack

### **Talks to Boys and Girls.** (Krishnamurti).

It is possible that a small group will meet in London to read and discuss the above book, which was reviewed in the September-October issue of *The New Era*. Any readers interested should write to Box 454.

\* \* \*

**Note.**—We regret that we described Miss Brooke Gwynne, author of the valuable article on *Some Modern Attitudes to the Teaching of Reading* in *The New Era*, September-October 1953, as belonging to the Department of Child Development at the University of London Institute of Education. Miss Brooke Gwynne is, of course, Senior Lecturer in English at that Institute. We offer our apologies for the mistake.

## **PITMAN**

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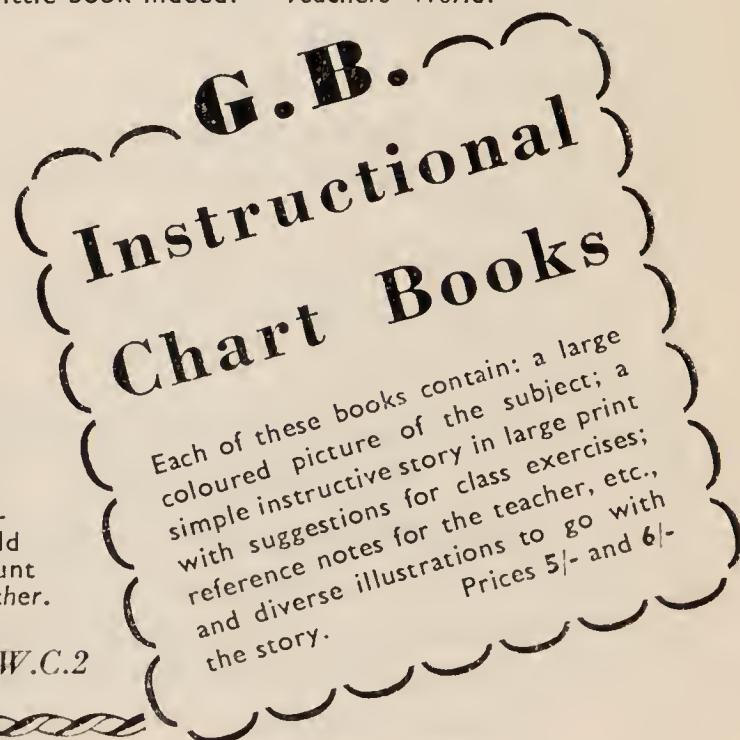
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# THE NEW ERA

IN HOME AND SCHOOL

## THE GOOD INFANT SCHOOL—IV<sup>1</sup>

E. R. Boyce

TEACHERS are frequently puzzled by children who are interested in books, speak fluently, join in with group reading activities and seem physically ready to learn to read. Yet they make no effort to do so, they do not volunteer to try, and they ignore all encouragement. In many cases, they are children who are emotionally immature in certain directions. They may not understand what is required of them in the way of attention to the task and so cannot co-operate in the learning situation. They cannot respond by making the necessary effort because they do not know how to try when we beg them to do so. In other words, they are too much babies and not enough school children to take their share in instruction.

They began by living in complete self-absorption, responding only to their own comfort and satisfaction. Interference came with growth. The outside world forced itself upon them with 'don't', 'you *must*' or 'you must *not*', 'no' and frowning disapproval. Conflict entered at the same time. On the one hand was 'my own satisfaction, myself and my wants'. On the other was a primary need for love, acceptance and approval. To keep the latter, the child must sacrifice the former. In theoretical language, the life of instinctual satisfaction (the Freudian pleasure-principle) conflicts with the demands of reality (the reality principle). Experience of many kinds gradually weans them away from utter self-indulgence and desire by way of many small successful solutions of conflicts towards a more civilized living, with its responsibilities, greater independence and more or less adjustment to reality. Conscience, a sense of myself as part of the world outside, a fair idea of what is and what is not acceptable, all helps to make up what is called the 'ego' or more colloquially, character. It is a long, gradual process, reaching a very significant expression about the sixth birthday and continuing for years, in some cases.

*Absolutely* freely chosen play without restraint brings the satisfaction of primitive pleasure-

principle living. It is impulsive desire with immediate satisfaction and can be abandoned at pleasure. The play in school which we discussed in the last article, with its limitation set by companionship, sharing, teacher-leadership, lack of space, observance of simple rules, is much more mature. It involves the need to deny, to hold one's own impulses in abeyance in order to be an accepted and loved member of the classroom community. Each child strives for this but with different degrees of intensity which indicates the strength of his self-discipline and the success of his adjustment. So the play in the good infant school provides the bridge between the two principles of living as well as the experience which leads them to accept responsibility in the matter of work. Charlotte Buhler calls it the 'work-attitude'. It is this attitude which is essential for successful learning from instruction. Children who are not emotionally ready for lessons are generally those who have not grown into a sense of purpose, which means the feeling of satisfaction that comes from undertaking a job and completing it as well as the knowing what to do when a job is imposed by the teacher. They are still too babyish that is, living more in fantasy on a pleasure, self-gratification basis than by meeting the demands of reality. Anna Freud and Charlotte Buhler agree that at the mental age of six, children have a special need to come to terms with reality by accepting work imposed by adults and by completing it. Jean Piaget continues to emphasise that logical thinking and capacity to learn emerges about the same age. All three psychologists, assert that through constructive play, children learn to accept and complete a task of learning.

Now let us return to the good school, which, by allowing children to play their way towards the 3R's, also provides the challenge for this important emotional development of knowing what a task of learning is and being able to co-operate

<sup>1</sup> This concludes Miss Boyce's series in *The New Era*, March, July and October, 1953.



as the teacher teaches. Readers of this series will recall that approach to readiness for lessons is first noticed when children plan their own tasks and when they declare 'I *must* finish this, so need I . . . ?' Further, they will probably agree that Piaget's 'task of construction' can include any purpose that is carried through to a conclusion, successful in the estimation of the child who initiated it, and involving sustained effort. It is surely untrue to accuse good modern infant schools of discouraging concentration!

From various anthropological studies, one gets the impression that children of primitive tribes, living close to the earth, grow into this work-sense easily and rather early. This is also true of children who share the activities of their parents on unmechanized farms in isolated places in Britain. Thoughtful and observant parents have remarked that toys play a less significant rôle in their childrens' lives when the complications of modern civilization do not come between them and the fundamental processes of getting food in which they have some small part. This is not the place for a detailed discussion of possible implications. But there is no doubt that the minds of the children in a good school which encourages them to take their share in many grown up experiences and in the management of their classrooms, carrying out simple instructions to do with real situations, become disciplined to thinking in ways dictated by realities of teacher and school. And there is no doubt that the staff recognize both the striving of the children to master reality and to receive instruction when they can use it. The next problem is 'what sort of instruction?'

The good Infant School provides *instruction* for children of about the mental age of six, in response to their strivings to become grown up by learning the skills that adults approve. This practice seems to be justified by Jean Piaget's summary of the results of his long and careful investigation into the thought of young children. Before this age, he concludes, children learn in an unordered way, slipping into knowing intuitively because of their experiences on a perceptual level. In school, they learn from the whole situation provided by companionship, teacher-child relationship and the educative environment. All the time, however, there is a gradual development towards a more sharpened thinking and a less blurred understanding which Piaget calls

'articulated' and 'operational' thinking and which eventually emerges as the power to deal with abstractions. We can, therefore, assume that ordinary children are mentally equipped for lessons at the time when they feel the need to master the basic skills.

Even so instruction can be wasteful and harmful if the nature and abilities of the children are ignored and if the art of teaching is not cultivated. Children do not leap into completely mature thinking power; it is a very gradual transition with a great deal of overlap. As a matter of fact, the thinking of the majority of adults functions on a pre-logical level much of the time.

The good school gears instruction to the powers of the children generally, as well as to the capacities of small groups and individuals. And the teachers recognize that the slipping-into-knowing way of learning must be recognised all through the infant school period. For this reason, they do not separate the 3R's from the activities. The rich environment and the satisfaction of other needs must continue throughout the sixth and seventh years, changing with the changing needs of growth and with the heightened sense of information, but never displaced by blackboard instruction or verbal lessons. Learning through the eyes and hands proceeds by the side of learning through instruction. Lessons are offered at the receptive time to those who are ready and adapted to those who are different. One day there may be no lessons, the next there may be a class lesson, group lessons and individual instruction. The guiding principle is the need of the particular children in a particular class.

The forms of instruction are infinitely varied. The whole class may watch the blackboard and take part in word study for ten minutes a day for half a term. A group may learn the meaning of the signs in arithmetic in two short blackboard lessons and proceed to memorise them by individual practice. Another group or perhaps the class will co-operate in a demonstration, led by the teacher, to clear up a misunderstanding about giving change at the shop.

All forms of instruction in the good school have one common quality—intelligence. An intelligent lesson is one that immature minds can make use of. And the art of intelligent instruction is based on modern knowledge of the mental and emotional growth of young children and of their individual differences. The good school does not



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provide boring repetition of 'sounds' and 'building', but blackboard demonstrations of the important clues for recognizing new word patterns. Teachers no longer confuse dots and counting with rules in arithmetic, so they do not demonstrate these tricks over and over again on the blackboard ending with 'now *you* do it'. But they show, by using the actual play material of the classroom, the importance of accuracy and just-rightness as they add and subtract in their shops. They do not spend fifteen minutes daily on the improvement of handwriting. But when india-rubbers appear from pockets of seven-year-olds for rubbing out and reforming badly made letters, she takes the hint. Those who are ready for practice to improve their handwriting receive intelligent guidance and opportunities for practice.

In the good school these opportunities for practice take the place of the daily dose of 'individual work'. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide time, place and materials for practice and improvement when it is needed and on the level required by individuals. This means that practice material has to be home-made. This is

not such a heavy task in the good school because the making of apparatus is no longer necessary. It has been replaced by real situations and solutions which are so much more educative and lead to greater understanding. A device for intelligent practice and improvement of a skill is not a teaching-apparatus and is far more important to good development.

There is no doubt that the good Infant school plays an indispensable role in the development of healthy personalities, particularly by enabling children to understand and come to grips with the adult world. But in the infant school world generally, one idea had been imposed on another until our aims are confused and our methods inconsistent with the advance of teachers' understanding of child development. It seems to me that this knowledge is not enough to convince us that we must construct the whole school organisation on the needs and strivings of children. We still have to learn that good education goes hand in hand with mental health. To our understanding of development, we must add a knowledge of mental hygiene.



# TELLING STORIES TO YOUNG CHILDREN

*Barbara Stinchcombe, Observations made as a student at Homerton College, Cambridge*

**L**ISTENING to stories can aid the development of a feeling for beauty and expressiveness in children, for these are built up as a result of the personal sensitivity and experience of the individual, growing gradually with maturation, leading to creativeness in music and the graphic arts. Is this sensitivity, insight or judgment present in children apart from instruction? Capacity in art and aesthetic values are virtually a part of man and appear in every age, in any people. Our aim is to foster and develop them in children. Story, here, plays an important part in awakening sensitivity and judgment.

The possibilities for enriching life greatly by the experience we offer to children constitutes a challenge to all who are interested in aesthetics. The richness of aesthetic appreciation depends upon this richness of response, intellectual and affective, which we have to words, colours, forms or sounds used by the artist or writer to convey meaning. The obligation of the school is to increase the children's ability to appreciate the aesthetic productions of genius by enriching their responsiveness to vivid experience.

Much of aesthetic value can be introduced before a child is eight years old, although creative imagination seldom appears before four years. Children under five years old find difficulty in interpreting a story into another medium, movement, painting, acting. Creative imagination always utilizes and is based upon experiences which the child has undergone; perhaps listening to a story or reading a tale for himself would come into this category. Some elements may fuse into originality after a period of time has elapsed. Older children who have developed their creative imagination display a critical attitude towards their work, the choice of books to read, and are articulate about it. Many invent stories of their own of artistic value.

Through story one can evoke a child's interest, curiosity and powers of imitation, by providing him with good examples. The child is unaware that he is imitating. He knows the story he is writing, the picture he paints, the play he acts, the mime he dances to be his own creation, unaware of what elements in it are the product of his experiences whether first-hand, or second-hand as with stories.

Story-telling has behind it a history of humanity's greatest achievement, the development of speech. Stories, both read and heard, aid and encourage linguistic ability. The teacher has no greater task than to transmit the inheritance of language, for it is a means of understanding the past and is the prelude to the new thinking of the future. Richness in vocabulary, accuracy in usage, the word for the thought and the thought for the word, rank high among the achievements to admire and to strive for in education.

Reading, too, cannot take place until understanding is present. Story can provide the background of experience necessary to help the child at the pre-reading stage. The way of a learner will, of course, be smoothed if he is accustomed to hearing the words he will be reading used in the speech of the home and the community. Progress, especially in the early stages, depends on the richness of the social environment, and children with rich backgrounds are more strongly equipped to attack the printed page than are the pupils of meagre backgrounds. One of the greatest difficulties encountered in learning to read is the lack of understanding of words and ideas. Meanings grow through experiences and contacts.

Simple stories that include familiar words and phrases, and nursery rhymes constitute a useful beginning. They develop responsiveness to things seen and heard, and efficiency in understanding, imitating and using them. Even before a child has an adequate background of appropriate experience he may form many intense and lasting attitudes towards races, professions, religions, marriage, foreigners, servants, towards morality and sin. This accounts for the nature of some children's stories!

From this brief outline of some of the effects of telling stories to children one can realize that to their all-round development (especially in infant schools) it helps them towards an awakening of their mental powers, particularly of thinking, which when aroused and unified by experience (very often the second-hand experience of story) benefits all the subjects taught, even the most logical. As Plato wrote 'Even when it comes to reasoning, the aesthetic approach will have been the best, because it will have given a man that



'instinct of relationship' which is the key to the truth.'

Story-telling is an art. The pleasure of listening to and telling stories is as old as man. Children need this rich enjoyment. Children feel the word-beauty and delight. They identify themselves with all the characters. They appreciate the element of surprise and laughter, which is a healthy reaction to the story.

Story-time is a social occasion. There is a definite relationship between the story-teller and the listener. 'Stories bring rest, refreshment and relaxation' writes Elizabeth Clark, which is particularly valuable at the nursery and infant levels. Emotional, social and moral growth is helped if the story-teller is successful.

The teller must enjoy telling the story, then the listener finds comfort in listening. Stories should be read critically for context and style before being handed on to children. The style of telling a story is important and calls for a real knowledge of the story and appreciation of its dramatic qualities and beauty of language, as well as of the ideas behind it. The teller must forget herself and feel the atmosphere and spirit of the story from within. She must experience it in a positive way with smiles, frowns, inflections of the voice and gestures, colourful vivid imagery and word pictures, with details from reality and from real experience to interest the children.

The beginning of a story should be confident in tone of voice and expression. Interest must be made to grow towards the climax. The conclusion should be satisfying, providing a smooth rounding-off. It is a good plan for the teller to be on the same level as the children, perhaps on the ground, or on a low chair for young children, perhaps with a child on the knee if the teller is a parent. There must be this contact between teller and listener. A teller must arouse the children's interest and hold it. A nervous, a dull, or a difficult child is best sitting somewhere very close to the teller.

Children do not always want to hear new stories, the old and familiar is comforting and satisfying in its

repetition. Yet when a new story is told, the vocabulary must not be beyond the children's understanding. Not that a solitary long word would distress a child. It may often fascinate them as they mutter it to themselves. Lear's fantastic verbiage is half his charm. Polysyllables, one must admit, on occasion bring nothing but delight, yet they should never be the main ingredient. There is conversely the danger that a story may consist entirely of everyday words and fall completely flat. 'Be master of as many good, old, round, exact, subtle, sweet-sounding English words as you can' as Walter De La Mare said, and this is good advice for a story-teller or writer for children under seven.

The following are examples of stories told to children from four years to seven years during teaching practices at St. Christopher's Nursery School, St. Pancras, N.W.1., and St. Barnabas Infants' School, Cambridge.

### *The Fuzzy Duckling*

*General aim of story.*—To allow the children to enjoy the pleasure and refreshment of quietly listening to a story, and to enlarge their experience by

*'...and Henry really is a problem'*



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imagination. To create an interest in the world of animals and the country, with these city-dwelling children.

*General Organisation.*—After the class-teacher had taken a five minutes' music period with the children, I took her seat at the closed piano. Then I saw a small Nursery chair and, as all the children were sitting on the floor, I took it as being nearer their level. The class-teacher had told me that morning that the story I had prepared was very familiar to them, but as I understood that they had not heard it since the Easter holidays, I thought that it might not be so familiar as to be boring and that an old favourite might help to establish a contact between myself and the children.

I thought that a rhyme or jingle might be a suitable way of collecting their attention, so asked Margaret to choose one. She chose 'Baa baa, Black Sheep'. The other children agreed to sing it so we sang unaccompanied.

I then showed them the cover of *The Fuzzy Duckling* book which I had brought. Bill E. (4.8) said 'Oh, the duck book!' and Robert (4.9) said 'I like that one.' Some of the children had stood up, so I asked them to sit down on the floor. Ursula (4.3) and Jimmy C. (4.4) had begun to fight. Jimmy was lying on the ground while Ursula pounded him in the chest. I asked Ursula to sit beside me. I then told the story and showed the pictures. As each new picture was shown, the children began to count the animals, e.g., three spotted dogs, six white geese. When I reached the end of the story, where the Fuzzy Duckling meets his mother and brothers, Bill E. (4.8) said 'Now turn over and show us them all in a line.' On the next page was such a picture so I commended him for remembering it. I then showed them an animal scrap-book, from which they named the animals. I told them I would put these books in their Reading Corner so they could go and sit down and read them whenever they wished. I then explained that they must be careful how they took care of the books and asked them to keep them in the Reading Corner as I had previously rescued a book from the sand-pit where someone had left it.

Before they went into the garden I asked who would put the two books into the Reading Corner. Jimmy, Robert and Bill offered to take them. Jimmy took one book while Robert and Bill took the other together as both were firmly holding it.

*Achievement.* I believe my general aim was achieved as the children seemed to enjoy the beauty of the familiar, and the rest after the energetic free choice of the Activity Period. At first it was rather difficult to gain their attention, but as soon as the book was introduced and I had started my story the children became quiet and watched and listened.

*Points of the Story.* 1. A fuzzy duckling wakes up. 2. Decides to go for a walk. 3. Meets two frisky colts who won't go for a walk with him. 4. Meets three spotted calves, four noisy turkeys, five white geese.

[The study continues with a description of fourteen other stories told on consecutive days, which show the student's growing confidence in the telling and her growing realization of what the stories mean to the children. She ends with descriptions of how the children dramatized the stories, both with puppets and by acting them. There is space for only one of these.]

### Dramatization in an Infant School

(12.12.52—class of six-year-olds at St. Barnabas Infant School, Cambridge).

In a previous Scripture lesson I had told the story of the Boy Samuel, using the flannelgraph. I asked the children what story they would like to act to-day, reminding them of their previous success in the story of the Three Wise Men.

*Robert M.* (6.6): I like the one about the mother who takes her little boy to be a priest.

*Elizabeth* (6.7): It's Samuel and God calls him in the night. I'll be God.

I accept her offer.

*Robert*: I'll be the little boy.

*Myself*: Who'll be the mother? Anna was her name.

Anne (6.6) volunteered. She was usually rather retiring so I accepted her offer, saying 'Yes, we'll have Anne because her name is very like Anna, isn't it?'

Nigel was Eli. (He had missed so many of our activities because he had to attend the Clinic most afternoons, so I thought it wise to include him.)

The children came out into the space we used to make by stacking up some of the tables.

*Myself*: (Sitting in one of the desks) I'll sit here and be part of the audience. Who comes on the stage first?



*Elizabeth*: The old priest does.

Nigel walked into the space.

*Elizabeth*: He doesn't look old, Miss Stinchcombe. Old men are bent.

Nigel looked at Elizabeth, then bent over as though he were leaning on a stick.

There was a silence.

*Myself*: Are you going to tell us about yourself?

*Nigel*: No. I'm just lighting candles.

Anne walked on and knelt down and said: I want a little baby boy, please, because I haven't got one. When I get one I'll bring him to church to be a priest like the Vicar.

*Elizabeth*: Nigel won't talk. He's got to ask her what she wants.

*Nigel*: What do you want?

*Anne*: A little boy.

*Myself*: What promise have you made, Anna?

*Anne*: When he grows big, I'll bring him to you to be a Vicar.

*Nigel*: I need some help. I'm a bit old.

*Myself*: What happened next?

*Elizabeth and Bobby (6.8)*: She had Samuel and when he grew up she took him back.

*Anne to Robert*: I've brought you to church to help Eli.

*Nigel*: Come and stay with me (to Anne). You hurry off while he's not looking.

*Elizabeth*: Anna's got to cry.

*Nigel to Robert*: This is your bed here. Mine's over there. Here's a drink of milk! Goodnight!

The two boys lie down.

*Elizabeth*: Samuel! Samuel!

Robert gets up and goes to Eli.

*Robert*: What's the matter?

*Nigel*: Go away. I was having a good sleep.

*Robert*: You called me.

*Nigel*: You're only dreaming. Go to bed.

*Elizabeth*: Samuel! Samuel!

Robert goes to Eli.

*Nigel*: I didn't call you. Go to sleep.

*Elizabeth*: Samuel! Samuel!

Robert goes to Eli.

*Nigel*: I didn't call you. It's God. When he speaks again say . . . I can't remember the words . . .

*Myself*: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.

Robert lies down.

*Elizabeth*: Samuel! Samuel!

*Robert (with my help)*: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.

*Elizabeth*: Eli's sons are too wicked to be priests.

Eli is an old man and he is going to die. When he is dead you will be by my priest. Go and tell Eli the news.

*Robert to Nigel*: You're going to die because you are old, but don't worry because I'll look after the temple.

*Conclusion*. This impromptu dramatizing is always valuable in any school. Very little was done in this one, partly because the children used the puppets a great deal in this time. It was a most valuable outcome of story, but I could not account for the popularity of Scripture stories both in drama and performance of puppets, unless it was the season of the year and the fact that it was a Church school. The more timid children did not volunteer for this as much as they did when we had puppets. I believed it was because they knew they could be seen, whereas with the puppets they could be identified with the character of the puppet.

It was a valuable exercise for the imagination and gave great freedom of expression to the more confident children. Valuable too for the on-lookers, who respected the children who acted for them and watched with interest—a change from the authority of the teacher.

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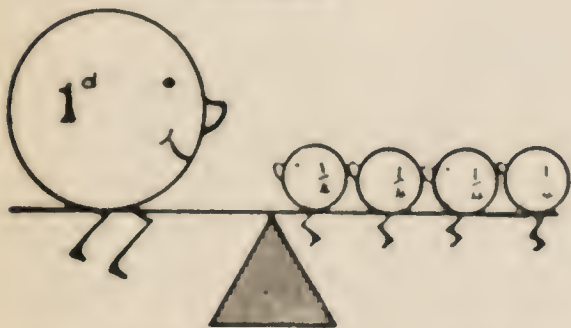
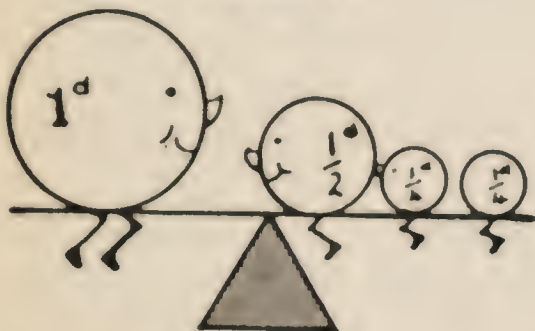
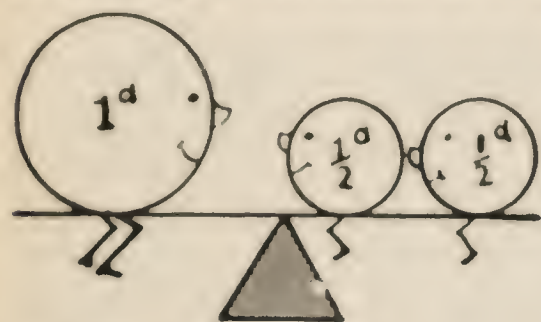
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# SOME EXPERIENCES IN CO-OPERATION BETWEEN TEACHERS AND PARENTS

With a Commentary by Margot Hicklin

THE original plan for this number of *The New Era* was to make it a special one on Parent-Teacher Relationships. We sent 'Teacher knows better than Mother', the first story told below, to about a hundred people, mostly in National Sections of the New Education Fellowship in Europe, the Americas and the Commonwealth, and asked them all to send in stories from their own experience showing how a lack of understanding between his parents and teachers had made life difficult for a child, and also how a good understanding between them can help him to grow, and can help the adults too. Only nine stories came in; all will be found below, with a commentary by Margot Hicklin which should help both the few contributors and their many readers to see the whole question of parent-teacher relationships in a richer and wider context.

Other readers, including parents, are urged to send in stories on this theme; if some are considered too personal or too slight for publication, this should be indicated.—*Ed.*

## THE WORLD OUTSIDE

### *Teacher Knows Better than Mother*

"When I went as Inspector to see a very good and progressive Primary School, the Headmaster drew my attention to a little boy of about eight and said: 'I have had a great deal of difficulty with the parents of that child. The mother comes almost daily to complain that he is growing exceedingly rude and naughty at home, and she blames the school for this.'

"The boy's mother worked in a factory and also in the evening as a charwoman, because the father was an invalid and she the only wage-earner of the family. The little boy was a particularly gentle and charming child. I was told that he was very fond of animals and went out of his way to play with and be kind to the smaller children in the school. I watched him giving some part of his sandwich lunch to cats and birds in the school playground. The mother said that he had always been very loving and helpful at

home and that he was aggressive only with her and only recently.

"I took the child to the Child Guidance Clinic but they found nothing wrong with his intelligence or social development, so I spent a morning in his class at school, observing him with his fellows and his teacher. This latter was a very strong personality; all the children loved her very much; several times I heard her encouraging them to be clean and tidy and well-mannered. She had put away all the metal mugs and plates provided for school meals, and had brought china from her own home for the dinner-table. She had also brought vases and flowers, and her classroom looked delightful. During mealtimes I heard her pointing out to the children that 'polite people (not children) eat in such-and-such a way and never do so-and-so.' At home, of course, the little boy and his family ate out of one dish; there was no tablecloth and no flowers. It was quite clear that he was punishing his mother for not doing the things that his teacher told him were correct. I explained this to the mother, who found ways of overcoming the difficulty."

THIS is one of the examples in which *social* stress is responsible for behaviour—the child's anger with his mother—which we are more accustomed to when due to stresses *within* a child. The interesting thing is that the little boy is described as 'particularly gentle and charming' and that he is helpful to animals and children as well as at home. The Child Guidance Clinic is able to affirm as normal his intelligence and social development, but it leaves the emotional problem to the Inspector who, fortunately, is well able to cope with it.

The problem itself is a familiar one: The teacher, acting as a super-mother, discards the unprepossessing implements provided by the school, and substitutes for them her own ideas of beauty and grace in home furnishing. Her aim may well have been to increase the children's appreciation of beauty, yet what conflict it produced in this delightful small boy, which he



expressed in his rudeness at home. He could not very well say, 'It hurts me to see that my mother has not got these beautiful things and I feel impotent to provide them.' A less well-balanced child might have stolen some of the things and taken them home; but this child, in his mute despair, was putting the blame where, to his immature mind, it belonged; he was showing his mother that he was perturbed. The fact that he could do so speaks highly for the family situation, and this is borne out by the last sentence in the story—once made aware of this conflict, the mother took over responsibility and 'found ways of over-coming the difficulty'.

### *A Well-spent Evening*

" 'But I can never get anyone to go round this district. It is so poor and dirty.' My next-door neighbour was trying to organise a collection-day in aid of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The district mentioned was one from which many of the children came to my school. Thinking it over for a minute, I said I would take that district.

"It was a very wet night, but with waterproof and tin, my tray of heather and flags, and some trepidation, I set off to 'do' my district.

"The first door was opened by a shy child who, when recognition dawned, ran off to bring mother with baby in arms. Father, it seemed, had had an accident at work and was now convalescing. Now I understood why the children had brought no dinner-money the last few weeks. This must be looked into, and with a word of encouragement about the children and forgetting about the tin, I passed on. At the next house, mother was out and father, in shirt-sleeves, answered the door with the children behind him. A decent, hard-working man, giving his wife an evening out and enjoying to the full a night with the children. There were no problem children here.

"The next close was dark and narrow. One of our little problems stood at the close-mouth, watching the rain—under-sized, under-fed, and always dirty. His 'Maw', he informed me, was 'awa' wi' a man' (father had gone off to London many years previously). Proudly he mounted the stairs with me to show me 'where I bide'. Jean, about eleven years old, was sitting in a dark room trying to read a novelette, with no fire on and chaos and dirt everywhere. Leaving a flag for each and with a word to Jean about

putting her little brother to bed before he was too cold, I crossed the dark landing and wondered what would come next. The door was opened by a bright-faced, fair-haired little girl who came to school beautifully dressed and cared for. The gas was lit and in the kitchen beyond the short passage I saw father, combing the hair of the little boy in pyjamas, before a bright fire which made the well-polished brasses shine. There could not have been a greater contrast. Now I knew why this little boy played only with his sister in the playground and why, at a later date, when she was promoted to the High School, he was very upset. But I was sorry for the little boy next door. Truly the sins of the fathers are visited on the children—or should it be mothers?

"Next on to the one-roomed house where mother had already put her only boy to bed. Father was abroad and every night she sat lonely beside the child, knowing it was for his good, although many of the other children were playing outside in spite of the rain.

"From now on I was escorted round the doors, each one insisting that I visited his house. Mounting the stairs in the next place, I was greeted by another mother who, on seeing my tray of heather, exclaimed 'Oh! this'll please him' and disappeared into the room beyond with a piece in her hand, returning in a minute with some money and followed by a very shy man still in working clothes. It seemed he belonged to the North of Scotland and, recalling my holiday in Western Ross, we were soon talking of the beautiful places he had missed so much, his wife smiling in the background. There is no trouble now with the two shy, rather dour little boys. They have always learned their lessons. Father sees to that.

"Now we come to the Square—once a most historic building, but now a neglected slum from which many of our children come. My coming had been heralded and many of the mothers, tired and bedraggled, were already at the doors, penny in hand, to see the teacher come into the Square. Some of the children came from the Square looking neat and tidy. Was it surprising that they were not all equally so?

"The twins were so disappointed that their mother was out at the pictures, but insisted that I saw 'oor hoose'. No wonder she was out! Living opposite the Dance Hall, she had to listen all the evening to the raucous noise of the mechanical dance band blaring out its monotonous tunes,



and the children ran wild while she soothed her jangled nerves at the pictures or elsewhere. This, then, was the reason why the twins always came late or even missed the forenoon session altogether.

"My escort now having been sent off to go to bed, I tackled the Dance Hall, for it, too, was in my district. 'Yes,' said the Manager, 'the interval is at nine-thirty. You'll get them in.' Such a crowd of sweating humanity in this very hot place! Could this be pleasure?"

"Why, here was Jeannie, so recently left school—the backward class—shyly smiling beside her boy friend who did not look so shy. And Mary, also a product of the backward class, but noisy and boisterous as usual, showing off with a group of boys who, at her dictation, produced something for the box. Their butterfly life will be short. So soon they will be the mothers of the next generation and live in the Square, while their school companions of greater intellectual ability are still studying for 'the Highers'.

"Many surprises were in store for me as I went the rounds of the tables, and many coins for the box, for the happy ones were generous. My thoughts on the way home were very mixed and in the days that followed my interest in the children was greater because of the background which fell into place behind them. And what of the box? It was the heaviest of the lot."

IN reading this sympathetic account of the out-of-school life in a poor and unlovely district, one is reminded of the opportunities that teachers had during evacuation of sharing more intimately in the lives of their pupils and thus getting an unprecedented understanding of their behaviour in school. The observer herself sums this up in her last paragraph by saying that 'the background fell into place behind them' and that her interest in the children became the greater because of it. Her thoughts, however, were very mixed. This is perhaps the best sign of her increased understanding. They were mixed because she had, for the time being, acted not in the rôle of a teacher, *i.e.* somebody who is expecting to give children her knowledge and ideas, but in the rôle of suppliant, asking them to give to her and through her for a cause which was dear to herself. It is fascinating to see how the actual result of the collection is influenced by the relationships between her and her pupils

which go back over the whole of their school careers. The girl who looks the other way, the girl who organizes her boy friends to come across handsomely with their contributions, are the most striking indications of this. But what a glimpse was vouchsafed to this observant and courageous enquirer of the contrast between the happy home in which the loving father was looking after his children, and the dark and depressing situation of the little boy next door! Surely the glimpse that this teacher had of the Dance Hall and of its meaning, both to the mother from the neglected home and to the backward girls, was an invaluable experience. How tired one gets of moralizing comments on modern youth and how tired the teachers themselves must get of knowing only the surface of the social stratum from which their pupils come! Here a teacher found one way of overcoming this which can be fruitful in any number of different settings.

NOT every young teacher has the opportunity of going out and seeing for herself how her young charges live, not even of meeting their parents in school. Having only recently come from Training College where emphasis has been placed on individual histories, she is naturally eager for any information that might help in bringing her closer to the child's background. In the following two stories, the need for this knowledge is amply demonstrated and it is shown that a teacher who is aware of the necessity for it, and keeps her eyes and ears open will, sooner or later, make an opportunity for getting the relevant information. The Head Teacher, on the other hand, has got a case when she tries to concentrate the parents' trust and confidence

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upon her own person. It is surely not every teacher who can utilize the intimate details of a child's history to best advantage, and instances are not unknown where, under the stress of fatigue or in a particularly irritating situation in class, confidence has been broken and information used to humiliate a child. If this should happen, it is the Head Teacher who must bear the brunt; she has not only to defend her staff, but also to try to re-build her relationship with the parents.

Yet, with these facts in mind, one may still recommend that Staff Meetings should bring about a more intimate sharing of policy with regard to individual children. It is this subtle delegation of confidence, far more than cold records, which can build the strongest bridge between the family and the school as a unit. Stress between them will usually attack the weakest link, which is between the difficult child—or the child's difficulty—and the inexperienced or inexperienced teacher.

#### *Handicapped by illness*

"In 1946 I was teaching the Reception Class<sup>1</sup> in a fairly large conurban County Primary Junior Mixed and Infants' School. No member of staff, other than the Head Teacher, was allowed to have contact with a parent, and we were not encouraged to seek information about the children's backgrounds.

"*Richard* subsequently was a puzzle to me; a dark, vivacious little boy of five, he was singularly inept in every way with his hands, and had no idea of dressing himself. He also walked rather peculiarly and his speech was 'babyish'.

"One day, when he was very much the last in the cloakroom, his mother, bravely breaking all rules, came across the playground to collect him, and we snatched a few minutes' conversation. I learned that Richard had had his legs in irons for three years before coming to school and that, since he was an only child, he had spent most of his toddler-hood as an onlooker, particularly where other children were concerned. This, of course, helped to explain his classroom attitude of sitting and watching, occasionally giving out babylike cries. After that brief conversation I had much more sympathy with Richard and he made much better progress."

#### *Two Mothers*

"In the same class, *Anne* had unaccountable fits of rebellious temper; she seemed always 'up agin it'. When she had been in school a term and a half, we had an Open Day. Parents walked in and out of the classrooms and the rule against approaching them was relaxed. A pleasant-looking woman came and asked to see Anne C's work. 'Are you Mrs. C.?' I asked. 'Oh, no,' she replied, 'only her foster-mother; she calls me Auntie.' 'But she always speaks of you in school as Mummy.' 'That must be to keep her end up with the other children' replied Mrs. F. I then learned that Anne had been removed from a broken home where she was neglected; nevertheless her real mother still visited her and brought her expensive presents. Poor Anne was obviously most insecure, although fond of her foster-mother and her tiny baby in the house. After that, I tried to show Anne more affection in school, and I think that it helped her.

"The Head Teacher most certainly knew a large part of these children's backgrounds, but thought it unnecessary to pass it on. Since working in schools where the staff have frequent reasonable opportunities for talking with parents, I have often thought how wrong this attitude was. Even if it is not practicable for class teachers to meet parents from day to day, the Head Teacher should, I think, at least realize that she has a responsibility in seeing that they have knowledge of their pupils' backgrounds."

**I**N the two examples here given, the knowledge gained by the teacher is undoubtedly productive of greater understanding. Having realized that Richard's babyish behaviour had a good and sufficient reason, 'I had much more sympathy with Richard and he made much better progress.' Cause and effect are very honestly stated here.

The development of Anne's relationship with her teacher is stated with equal sincerity. Having discovered equally good and sufficient reason for Anne's fits of temper, 'I tried to show Anne more affection in school and I think it helped her.' In these two examples the teacher's sympathy and affection may not alone have been responsible for the marked improvements. A positive or a negative effect on the child at home may be noticed when first the home situation is affected through contact between parents and teachers. But as

<sup>1</sup> i.e. five year olds who are just starting their compulsory schooling.



a rule it is a relief to the mother when the teacher is in sympathy with her child's short-comings; school becomes less of a bogey and the strain between parent and child is eased. As a result, the child is more freely available for positive influences in school. His energy can flow easily into the actual pursuits suggested, and less is needed for concealing his feelings either at home or in school.

One last word about the Head Teacher. She very often gets blamed or assumes the rôle of a forbidding person when one of her subordinates acquires fuller understanding. It is as though, in a family, the mother and child relationships were kept happy at the expense of those between the child and the grandmother or the mother and the grandmother. There is no need to deplore this too much; it seems that a constant state of goodness would be inhuman in the teaching profession quite as much as in the home!

### THE SILENT GROWTH

So far, our examples have dealt primarily with a social situation in which the teacher, although part of a given situation, has found a way of transforming it by creating a new bond between himself and the world in which the child lives outside school hours. The following examples still contain the same element of social change but—and this may be due to the personalities of the teachers concerned—we see a greater involvement of the personal relationships between the individual parent and the teacher. The rôle of the child is, in a sense, that of a go-between, and the emphasis is on the changes occurring both within the teacher through his greater insight and in the parent through his increased confidence. This is most clearly seen in the second story, in which the social milieu is so small that it has become an integral part of the miniature drama.

#### *So Correct that he did Everything Wrong*

"Wolfgang was the most aggressive boy in my class. He liked fighting with everybody but nobody cared to fight with him because he almost always won. He was about ten when I used to see him every day. At first everything seemed to be all right with him. He was a gifted child, big and strong for his age, and well-behaved in class. But I noted that all the other boys had some kind of fear of him; they were very careful

and sometimes respectful of him. Wolfgang liked to be the leader in all kinds of games and sports.

"One day he had not done his homework. I wrote the usual note in his exercise-book which his father was supposed to sign. The next day the page with the note had been carefully taken out of the exercise-book. I talked to Wolfgang about this but could get no reaction from him. He looked like a stone and I could not get a word out of him. That was when I realised that he was really unhappy. His aggressiveness against others must have been a symptom of this. There was no real friendship between him and the other boys. When I talked to him in a friendly way he became mistrustful; if I used hard words his eyes told me: I hate you.

"I did not know what to do about Wolfgang so I tried to get in touch with his parents. I was able to meet his mother in the playground but it was only a short conversation. She was not able to meet my informal approach. She looked just as unhappy as the boy did. So I did not talk to her as I had meant to do. But some days later the father came to see me because he had heard that his wife had met me. He was very critical about her handling of the boy. He was really a man of good will, but I think he wanted to be so correct that he did everything wrong.

"The story was that Wolfgang's father had died in the war. This man had been his best friend and had liked his wife, so he married her. He had promised his friend to look after his boy, so he did so. He used to look over his school-work every day and intended Wolfgang to become as clever as possible. He punished him when he did anything wrong. The boy was made to work for longer hours than the other boys in his class until he reached a satisfactory standard. He expected his wife to adopt the same attitude and he kept a sharp eye on her to make sure she did.

"It was a hard job to persuade Wolfgang's new father to relax his control over the boy and his mother. He could not believe that his only duty at first was to love the boy. The best we could agree upon was that he would give Wolfgang a little more free time and would avoid any kind of punishment. Wolfgang and his mother knew nothing of our talk, nor of the one that followed about four weeks later. This time the father came to me with very mixed feelings. He had observed that under the new regime his wife had become much happier but that the boy was still not at



ease with him. His school work was much less satisfactory at this time, but I ignored this and did not mention it to him. Love is a plant of very silent growth. But it grew.

"Meantime, the situation has changed. The father and I have become friends and we really help each other. He comes to me nearly every month but still nobody knows about that. The most important fact is that Wolfgang has now three new friends: a boy in the class, his father, and his teacher."

THIS story of Wolfgang and his new father has a happy ending in which Wolfgang has become the central point of a triangle of friendship between his father, his teacher, and a boy in his class. But this end result could not have been achieved if the emergency in which Wolfgang found himself had not brought forth in his teacher the willingness and the ability to insert himself into the situation without pushing himself forward with misguided missionary zeal. 'Love is a plant of very silent growth, but it grew'—and so no doubt did the teacher who made this discovery.

#### *I Felt that I was Needed*

"It was in 1946. As soon as I had finished my studies I became teacher of a one-roomed rural school. The village was very poor and the living conditions of the population were very hard at that time. Just opposite the school-house was the little home in which a family of seven children were living, five of them already at school. The father was an unskilled worker in a slate-mine and the neighbours said that the mother had already been a thief when she was a child, by which they implied that she was still capable of stealing.

"The children were very quiet in school but not in their free time. They played together, for other children would not play with them—their parents would not allow it. One evening I heard terrible cries from across the street, and when I opened the window the neighbours told me that it was Heinz, the twelve-year-old boy, who was crying. His father used to hit him almost every evening, but to-day his daily punishment was unusually hard. Heinz had climbed into a house, broken into the drawer of a cupboard, and stolen money and other things. A policeman came to

question him and things were looking very hopeless for my poor Heinz.

"I felt that I was needed and went over to the house, where the boy was sitting in a corner, unable to speak because he was so frightened. I persuaded the policeman to leave the house without questioning the boy and I promised that Heinz would tell me the story truthfully. The father was so happy that the policeman had disappeared that he did as I asked and did not beat Heinz further, at any rate until after I had talked to him. Fortunately I lived near a teacher-training institute with a Child Guidance Clinic attached. The next morning the Psychologist in the Clinic came with me, and he and Heinz and I sat talking together. The boy told us of his worries and, as a result, our picture of him was completely changed. He had seemed to be a selfish boy who had no friends and wanted no comrades, but he turned out to be a boy of deep feeling, sensitive, but he had closed all these feelings inside him, because the world outside had no confidence in him. He hated others because nobody liked him, and that was the reason for various thefts, over the last of which he had been caught.

"It was clear that his parents could not understand what lay behind the boy's trouble, but when I visited them we tried to find ways in which we could help Heinz. I suggested that he might help his mother to care for the younger children and for the pets. We found that we could talk openly with the boy. At school I let him help the first-graders to learn to read and he was given responsibility for the small amount of money which the School Council had collected. I showed him that I trusted him and when, after a while, the children noticed that he did his work without any mistakes (I naturally kept a close eye on him) their feelings about him began to change. So did those of his parents when they heard how well he was doing at school and when they discovered how helpful he was at home. By good co-operation between school and parents the mental health of this boy improved."

TO those of us who were in Germany in 1946, the description of the village and the people in it holds a particularly clear meaning. Distrust of one's neighbours was one of the most painful factors of everyday German life at that time and, with a great number of up-rooted migrants and



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*The Scotsman*, 8th October, 1953.

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deported individuals, both German and foreign, constantly moving in search of new homes or even of over-night shelter, anybody who was not firmly established in his village community would have had a particularly hard time—the mother whose reputation for stealing has clung to her from childhood, the children shunned by everybody and therefore dependent on each other, and Heinz, probably the most sensitive of them, who brings out the common problem and is punished the harder for it by his father.

The teacher here is able to help in two ways: firstly, by being a link between this narrow and bigoted world around him and the advanced ideas of the Teacher-Training Institute and the Child Guidance Clinic, and secondly in the more important way of being near at hand both physically and spiritually. He produces an element of confidence and trust by promising the policeman that Heinz will tell him the truth. Further, he puts this trust into practice by showing the mother how Heinz may help her with the other children. Next, he tries the boy out at school by letting him assist with younger children and finally entrusts to him school funds which he, the teacher, is responsible for. These stages in the rehabilitation of this boy's character must have had a profound effect on the standing of the whole family in the community. The expression of the problem, contrary to that in the first set of examples, was in terms of *social* disturbance, but the treatment had to be fundamentally a psychological one. Otherwise, no change could have taken place in such a long-standing and, I believe, deep-rooted condition:

### *Showing Father the Way*

"There was a man living in my little village who did not like work and who was not at all good at helping or understanding other people. One afternoon, in my absence, his daughter, together with other children, was playing in the school yard when suddenly a ball, thrown by this child, hit a window and broke it. Next morning—I had returned late in the afternoon and had not noticed what had happened—I was told about the broken window but could not find it. The father of the child had gone into the school-house, had repaired the window himself and all looked like new. I thanked him for his good offices in relation to the school. 'Oh,' said he, 'don't thank me. It was



my girl who brought me in to do it. I was so astonished that she felt so much responsibility for the school that I felt mine should not be less.' "

THIS extraordinarily touching and simple story has the style of a folk-tale and might have been collected by the Brothers Grimm except that it is not a fairy-tale. It is significant that the author of it is the same person as the one of our previous example, and, although his own part is here modestly overlooked, one cannot doubt that the young girl who broke the window and who showed her father the way to make reparation and to be helpful had a long and happy school history. Would it be extravagant to suggest that she may even have resorted to the desperate measure of breaking a school window in order to bring her father's skill and ability to bear upon it? Surely one may hope that this encounter with the teacher will in time have led to further growth of the 'silent plant' between them?

### *Who's Afraid of Snails?*

"As everyone knows, Nursery School children are deeply interested in the garden, especially in the worms, woodlice, caterpillars, and other creatures. In our Nursery School this interest is looked upon as a most desirable thing and the children are encouraged in every way. Janice developed a passion for snails and we did not realise that this was causing trouble at home. Mother thought they were 'nasty, dirty things', and told Janice she was not to play with them. So the little girl stood about in the school garden with her hands behind her back, wanting to go on playing with the snails but 'Mummy said I mustn't'. Too late we talked to Mummy. She had decided we were not 'nice' people, and Janice, who lived and slept with her parents in one small furnished room and who desperately needed Nursery School life, was withdrawn.

"At the next Parent-Teacher Association meeting we talked a lot about the young child's interests.

"Then Linda started collecting boxes of snails. She was a difficult little girl but seemed to get some satisfaction from this. When she arrived home with the snails Mummy was less enthusias-

tic, but, because we had explained, she did not say 'No'. Instead she came to the Superintendent saying: 'I *know* it's right for Linda to play with snails, though I can't bear them myself. But we've only a little yard and it's getting full of snails.' So then the Superintendent told Linda that, after all, they *were* the Nursery School's snails and she thought Linda should only *borrow* them. This Linda accepted—she borrowed a box of snails each evening and returned with them next morning. Everyone was happy except possibly the school gardener."

BETWEEN the ages of three and five slugs and snails will have a kind of fearsome attraction for most children. They will either shun these creatures, begin to collect them, dissect them, or use them to frighten people. In particular, many grown-up persons have a deadly phobia for snails and slugs, deriving from that period. Children are quick to deduce this weakness and to play upon it. This is what Janice did, but it is doubtful that 'this was causing trouble at home'. Trouble was at home already, for mother disliked the 'nasty, dirty things' and, moreover, Janice and her parents lived and slept in one small furnished room. We all know that children's fantasies about their parents' intimate life are very vivid at this age, and it is easy to see that the snails had a further meaning beyond their actual nature. Perhaps if the mother had been able to talk this over with somebody she need not have withdrawn Janice from the Nursery School.

With Linda, on the other hand, the staff, having learned the lesson of Janice, enlisted the mother's co-operation in the most skilful way. Nevertheless, if the dislike of this mother had been as strong as that of Janice's, she probably could not have co-operated, with the best of intentions, for these phobias in grown-ups go very deep and are not subject to the exercise of will. One is on dangerous ground in trying to over-ride them, even for the benefit of a child, and it is wisest to propose some substitute for playing at home in such a case.

### SUMMING-UP

In trying to look at common elements in these nine stories, one would venture to suggest that



the teachers who supplied them enjoy a positive outlook on human nature, which allows them to try original and creative solutions to unusual problems. Those that are reported succinctly would probably, on fuller analysis, show many elements in common with those that we can study in greater detail. It is the readiness to undergo a personal experience rather than to act upon preconceived ideas, however modern, which characterizes them. We can see that the words 'experienced teacher' take on a new meaning. No longer do they imply long years of faithful service only, with the possibility that many original ideas have turned into a comparatively stale routine. An experienced young or new teacher is one who is open to experience and willing to understand it. Hand in hand with this, we also see a new moral attitude arising, which is an expansion of responsibility for the child beyond the class room.

The usual complaints about crowded classes and lack of spare time for teachers do not cover the ground to which we refer. In two of the stories the actual sense of 'neighbourhood' leads to a true neighbourliness, whether it is collecting

money in the local Dance Hall or leaving the school and going across the road to where a small boy is being beaten 'because one is needed'. It is not here suggested that self-sacrifice or an unnatural altruism is required for this extended sense of social participation. It is quite another and a very simple thing, which is normal to human development from the narrower to the wider circle. At its best there is no distinction between giving and taking. As one of the writers says, 'the situation has changed. The father and I have become friends and *we really help* each other.' This is an approach to which many parents can respond who would be too shy or too proud to approach the teacher to ask for help for themselves or for their children. Yet it is no simple panacea. It would be interesting to know what stories of failure each contributor could supply, to set beside these with a happy ending. Many good teachers who have experienced set-backs in their attempts at closer co-operation with parents, may feel encouraged by the thought that much continues to grow underground and over a long period, before the actual flowering can be seen.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### DANISH SECTION

Two good things happened last year: The new magazine was established in co-operation with *Det Paedagogiske Selskab*, and our membership grew very markedly.

*Dansk Paedagogisk Tidsskrift* was established in January, 1953, based on the magazine of 'Vor Ungdom' (Our Youth) (circulation 1,100-1,200), and the Danish Section's journal *Paedagogisk-Psykologisk Tidsskrift* (circulation 3,200-3,500). The editorial staff of the new magazine consists of three from each association (F. Bøgh, Editor, W. F. Hellner and Thorkil Holm, Secretary to the Editor, all from *Det Paedagogiske Selskab*, and, from the Danish N.E.F., Georg Christensen, Editor, Kr. Thomsen Jensen and Torben Gregersen, Secretary to the Editor. It started with 600 subscribers from 'Vor Ungdom' and 2,200 from the Danish N.E.F., plus about 400 through the booksellers (total 3,200 copies). The Ministry of Education gave us, first, 15,000 kr. for propaganda and then 10,000 kr. Now the subscription list is 1,025 copies to *Det Paedagogiske Selskab*, 3,975 to the Danish N.E.F., 50 direct subscribers belonging to neither body, and 500 through the booksellers (total 6,020 copies).

The nine issues of 1953 have appeared, with 468 pages in all.

Both associations have a total subscription (including receipt of the magazine) of 10 kr. That means that the increasing membership does not give us more money. In the year 1955 we will try to raise the subscription to 12 kr. The new magazine carries more articles about school and fewer on psychology than the old, the articles are not all so radical as before, and sociological aspects are a little neglected.

We have got 2,000 new members and lost about 225, so the present list numbers 4,000 members, 1,300 more than we ever had before. A big proportion of the members are in Copenhagen. The eight Branches had members as follows (May, 1953): Aalborg (184); Aarhus (158); Esbjerg (94); Fredericia (45); Horsens (98); Nyborg (35); Odense (171); Vejle (61).

The Copenhagen Branch consists of all members in Zealand and those who are not living in a town with a Branch or near a Branch. At least 1,000 of the *new* members are students from the training colleges. 1,300 of all members are students who pay lower fees but who do receive the magazine.



All Branches arrange evening meetings and some of them also have study-groups. In 1953 meetings on the following themes were held in Copenhagen:

- (1) How psychology and education have influenced each other since 1900.
- (2) Who is 'wordblind'? Difficulties in the diagnosis of reading difficulties.
- (3) Why creative work in schools? (Lecturer: Rikard Sneum).
- (4) Education in Art.
- (5) Children's problems in the light of social psychology.
- (6) Problems in U.S.A. schools.
- (7) Why are educators now so unsure of their task?
- (8) Should children of seven be in kindergarten or in school?
- (9 and 10) Two exhibitions, with critiques, of the new text-books.
- (11) Kindergarten buildings and equipment.
- (12) The mental hygiene of the school (with 1½ hours transmission in the State's Broadcast).

Several times we have tried to make something a little like 'club life' for our members, but they are very realistic. They are interested in facts, didactic-methods, mental hygiene. We must give them more 'bread', things they can use the next day in the classroom! Most of them do not feel like 'N.E.F. members', but they join because they need the magazine and the practical help. These facts can perhaps be illustrated by another fact; we have about 10 per cent. of all the teachers in Denmark as members. Some twenty years ago the Section was a sect—perhaps more N.E.F.-minded than now—but only a sect and very distinct from the general run of teachers. Now the Section is more 'broad' but has missed a little of the 'spirit'. For a proper judgment of the work of the Section, I should think these facts are very necessary.

A big part of our work is done outside the Section. The magazine *Unge Pædagoger* and the publishers *Unge Pædagogers Forlag* are run by our younger members. Our members are very active in many committees and organizations, such as OMEP, the Commission for School Psychology, etc.

*Books.* During the last year we have published only one book, Sofie Risbjerg's *The School for Backward Children* (Hjælpe-skolen), the first big book in Scandinavia for teachers in that type of school. In 1952 the Section sold 8000 kr.'s worth of literature from *Psykologisk-Pædagogisk Bibliotek* published by the Section and Munksgaard Publishers.

As a prelude to the Askov meeting, we had the

great pleasure of seeing representatives from nineteen N.E.F. Sections in Copenhagen, where Miss Rebekka Rasmussen was hostess and guide for them.

All activities cost a lot of money and we have had for the last year a deficit of 12-13,000 kr. (£600)! We get 1,800 kr. (£90) a year from the municipal authorities of Copenhagen and we are trying also to get a subsidy from the Government.

TORBEN GREGERSEN

## FRENCH SECTION

The French Section met on September 7th, 8th and 9th, under the Presidency of Professor Wallon, for a three-day Study-Conference which was open not only to members but to all teachers.

Two questions were under discussion: the teaching of Number, and Discipline. The former was introduced by M. Senez as *rapporteur* of the *Groupe d'Instituteurs du Nord*, which had undertaken the preparatory study of the question. They put forward for discussion a whole series of technical points on the use of concrete material, ways of presenting the child with synthetic experiences in number before expecting analysis of them, the appropriate timing of the transition from the concrete to the abstract, the rôle of linguistic development in easing the difficulties presented by problems.

But from the discussion which followed, one dominant idea emerged: That the aim of the teaching of Number is essentially the development of the child's mind and understanding (*esprit*) and not merely training in a utilitarian technique.

The conclusion unanimously adopted was that all those who claim to be on the side of the New Education should resist the present-day tendency to separate children at an early age into two categories, one directed towards general culture and the other towards the mere learning of utilisable techniques. The right of all children to receive the most advanced intellectual training of which they are capable was energetically defended; it was based on the findings of child psychology and the study of child development.

Then M. Gal, Director of the *Centre de Co-ordination Pédagogique*, gave a brief report on the work of the Commission on the Teaching of History which revealed the extraordinary misunderstanding which has been created between teachers and text-books on the one hand and pupils on the other, by the semantic imprecisions of historical vocabulary.

M. Gal then proceeded to introduce the study of the question of Discipline. After a number of members had illustrated technical points by recounting their personal experiences, the conference concluded that the basic principles that



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lie behind the idea of sanctions, of relationships between children and adults, should be reviewed in the light of the current development of our society. The fundamental idea of work has altered. From being the enslavement of man it has become the very dignity of man, his means of working for a better future. A teacher who is deeply convinced of this idea can no longer employ old disciplinary measures. Work itself unites him with his pupils, the class or the school becomes a place of fruitful collaboration in which questions of discipline can resolve themselves in a harmonious manner in a climate of affection, based on the common effort of adult and child.

At the end of this Study-Conference, the French Section held its Annual General Meeting, at which Mme Seclet-Riou, Honorary General Secretary, presented the Annual Report. Professor Wallon gave the concluding address.

F. SECLÉT-RIOU

### ITALIAN SECTION

A four days' regional conference on activity methods in Italian schools was held in Penne, a hill-town in Abruzzo, from October 8th-12th, 1953. It was the first time that the Italian

Section of the N.E.F. organized a meeting in the South. The participation of several teachers from southern regions to various conferences during the past few years, particularly to refresher courses and seminars of C.E.M.E.A. and 'Fraternité Mondiale', has made it possible for the Secretariat of the N.E.F. in Italy to win the sympathy and co-operation of southern educators. It is worth recalling that the present secretary of the Italian Section of the N.E.F., Professor Raffaele Laporta, is himself from Abruzzo, and he personally succeeded in obtaining the support of the local authorities in Penne for the organization and financing of the meeting. Besides about forty elementary and secondary school teachers from Penne and other towns and cities of Abruzzo, many people from various professions and different sections of the town took part in the meeting. The Conference was presided over by Professor Ernesto Codignola, President of the Italian Section of the N.E.F.

During the opening session of the meeting the Mayor of Penne greeted the participants in the name of the town. Dr. De Bartolomeis, of the University of Pisa, and Dr. Borghi, of the University of Palermo, introduced the topic of the meeting. Four major types of activity methods were presented and discussed during the four days of the conference. The first day was devoted to the study of the Freinet techniques, and Dr. Tamagnini, who has been a pioneer of this method in Italy, led the discussion. During the second day, the audience was called upon to consider the importance of audio-visual media as contributors to a new education. Dr. Laporta introduced and led the discussion. That same day Mme Codignola, who directs with Professor Codignola a well-known progressive school in Florence, 'Scuola-Città Pestalozzi', described in detail the educational experiment to which she has dedicated herself. The third day was crowded, with presentation and discussion of the practices achieved by the 'Centre d'entraînement aux méthodes de l'éducation active' (C.E.M.E.A.), with various examples of dramatization and creative expression. Three young Italian teachers, Pagliuzzi, Pettini, Trentanove, who have done much in Italy to foster the introduction of activity methods in the elementary schools, presented the topic to the public. A summary of the various topics of the conference was made at the end by Dr. Coèn, from Florence. The success of the conference was indicated by the founding of a N.E.F. group in Penne with 34 members. New regional conferences are planned in other parts of Italy for the next few months.

LAMBERTO BORGI



## NEW ZEALAND SECTION

During 1953 branches of the New Zealand Section have been active in Auckland, Feilding, Nelson, and Dunedin, and regular meetings have been held to discuss topical problems in education. By bringing together on common ground people with different sectional interests (both inside and outside the teaching profession) these N.E.F. meetings have continued to do a valuable service to education.

G. W. PARKYN

## PAKISTAN SECTION

Regular weekly discussion meetings have been held at the Central Training College, Lahore, during the past year. The following are the subjects discussed, some of which, of course, have occupied more than one meeting: (1) *You and Educational Science* (responsibilities for knowing and extending educational science, which should be the basis for all that is done in schools); (2) *Some Contributions of Research to Methods of Teaching* (group relationships and learning, the learning environment, sociometric techniques, pupil-teacher relations); (3) *Is Progressive Education a Failure?* (meaning of 'progressive education', shortcomings and contributions, present status); (4) *The Evaluation of Teaching Efficiency* (what research says, difficulties involved, proposed techniques); (5) *Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfactions of U.S.A. Teachers* (results of research, importance of morale, how morale may be improved); (6) *The Parent-Teacher Association Movement* (present status: size and programmes, shortcomings and contributions, how programmes may be improved); (7) *Adult Education in the U.S.A.* (present developments and future trends); (8) *Recent Trends in Elementary Education* (characteristics of the modern elementary school); (9) *The Community School Idea* (contributions of schools to communities and communities to schools, examples of successful experiments); (10) *Work Experience and Education* (problems in occupational adjustment, industrial and vocational education, work experience programmes, relations with employers).

ANIS-UD-DIN ANSARI, *General Secretary*

## TASMANIAN SECTION

During 1953, as well as its ordinary meetings of members, the Launceston Group has been holding semi-public meetings in an attempt to gain the interest of a wider circle of people, particularly parents. Two evening meetings of this nature were held early in the year at the

Methodist Ladies' College. These were attended by representatives of several Parents' and Friends' Associations and resulted in some very useful discussion. At the first meeting a panel of parents, representative of children at various stages of education, introduced a discussion on: 'What I expect the school to do for my child'. At the second meeting, a panel of teachers introduced the discussion on 'What I expect the home to do for my pupil.'

At present the Group is concerned at the amount of worthless and indecent reading matter being displayed by newsagents and read by so many teenagers. One meeting has already been held, which was addressed by a member of the Federal Parliament, as well as the State Government, a representative of the Council of Parents' and Friends' Associations, the booksellers, and the medical profession. A resolution was passed at this meeting asking the Prime Minister to convene a meeting of the Premiers of the States to consider means of combating what is regarded as a serious menace to the community. It was also resolved to hold a public meeting on this same topic at a later date.

H. F. DEANE, *Secretary*

## U.S. SECTION

1. 'The American Education Fellowship' no longer exists. By vote of the Board of Directors, the name was officially changed on September 15th, 1953, to its original name, The Progressive Education Association, under which it was organized in 1919. The new organization is incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois, where the magazine, *Progressive Education*, continues to be published under its original title.

2. The Progressive Education Association has for the moment no official policy. By vote of the Board of Directors, the policy adopted in 1947 has been rescinded, and a new one is in process of being drawn up. A draft, written chiefly by Professor Harold Rugg, was published in the November issue of *Progressive Education*.

3. President H. Gordon Hullfish reports that the indebtedness of the P.E.A. is being reduced at a fairly rapid rate.

4. The only recording ever made of the voice of John Dewey is being made available by the P.E.A. The price is \$4. The record is called *Art as Our Heritage*, and it may be obtained from the P.E.A. Inter-State Press, 19 N. Jackson Street, Danville, Ill., U.S.A.

5. The magazine, *Progressive Education*, will be edited again this year by Dr. Archibald Anderson, University of Illinois.

TED BRAMELD



# CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONALLY-MINDED SCHOOLS

The Conference of Internationally-minded Schools, meeting at Salem School, near Lake Constance, at approximately the same time as the N.E.F. at Askov, restricted itself, in its stated aims, to discussion of opportunities for the teaching of international understanding: but, as so many conferences find, its members created their own topics as the days passed, and while the general purpose was never forgotten, the work and talk became both more practical, more varied and more critical. There were, after all, sixteen nationalities among the sixty-odd members, and they included those whose concern was for the mentally-defective or the pre-school child, as well as those who trained teachers or were specialists in pre-university education. Yet their common problem was clear: how to create that atmosphere, whether in the kindergarten or the training-college, where tolerance and interest in others expresses itself in good relationships and in creative activity.

As at Ommen in 1952, the group spent the first four days in sight-seeing and getting to know itself; a long day on the Bodensee, visits to the Salem Junior Schools, to the Children's Village at Trogen and the wonderful Library at St. Gall; opportunities to enjoy sunshine, a pastoral landscape and jewels of Baroque architecture; these were balanced by deep discussion in twos and threes, by less serious chat and laughter over the delicious wines of the region, and by a growing understanding of the history and purpose of Salem School, a fitting background for such a conference.

Prince George of Hanover was a most generous and friendly host, and members of his staff and household vied with one another in their welcome. While direct contact with Eastern Germany could not be made, the problems of Germany to-day were present to all minds; those who spoke of them made a strong and positive contribution to the general understanding.

From the first, no pretence was made that the problems facing the members were simple or easy to resolve. The different levels of 'understanding', the time-lag between intellectual comprehension and emotional acceptance, the ever-present conflicts between classes and kinds inside one community the danger of 'escapism' from immediate difficulties into pleasantly remote idealism—these were all perceived: but a fundamental unity of purpose was also apparent, and a harmony which by many, was recognized as essentially religious.

The formation of right, or good, attitudes was the theme on which Dr. Wall, of Unesco, chose to speak, and his sympathetic perception of the child's needs as he grows up in a widening community made his hearers question themselves as to their provision, in themselves and in their organization, for those needs. Such an analytical approach provided a salutary discipline for future discussions.

The pattern of group discussion, with reports rendered to a plenary session, ensured the maximum use of the individual's contribution, and the profit of all who shared the summing-up. Members were divided, in the

first stage, according to the age-groups they taught, and asked to discuss specific points about their children's psychological characteristics and relationships. A group of Heads dealt with related problems of administration and staff.

In the second stage of the Conference, the application of theory to practice resulted in interesting contributions by specialists and specialist groups, who showed how handwork, history, modern languages and science, puppetry, inter-school exchanges, and so on, could be used to enlarge children's understanding both of themselves and of others. At the same time, the creative instincts of the whole group were expressed or entertained by evening sessions of music, mime, poetry and drama, at an artistic level which satisfied and delighted.

The presence of the Chairman, Professor Dobinson, early in the Conference, served to bind the participants together and crystallized their impressions of C.I.S. ends and means. Future plans were discussed, and the de-centralization of the organization planned. A Junior Festival of the Arts and a Work Camp for boys, both to be held in England, were discussed in detail, and a Teachers' Conference in Norway proposed. While the C.I.S. relies on personal contact and active participation among its members, it cannot assume huge proportions; but the enthusiasm and vitality manifest at Salem suggest that it too has a valuable contribution to make to the 'New Education' of the mid-century.

*Elizabeth H. Maxwell*

## Book Reviews

**Schools Aren't What They Were.** Carleton Washburne. (Heinemann. 7/6).

To members of the Fellowship who are meeting the forces of reaction now stalking the land, Carleton Washburne's straightforward case for the New Education will give strength and renewed confidence. No special pleading is here, and no specious reasoning. Simply set down are the aims of the New Education, the justifications for the New Education, and, perhaps most importantly, the proofs that the New Education works.

'Are children, educated in progressive schools, really as well educated, in terms of results, as are those in traditional schools?' he asks. For answer

he cites the report of the Boston Survey Committee; he enlarges upon the results of his own great work at Winnetka; he refers to many other investigations, scientifically undertaken, to test comparative results, and he describes in detail the most important study of all—'The Eight Year Study' carried out between 1932 and 1940 in which thirty high schools of different sizes and kinds, in different parts of the United States participated. The results of all these research studies prove that 'the evidence is overwhelming that when we use traditional measures . . . and test the formal academic knowledge which is the main goal of traditional education, the youngsters who have had progressive education do at least as well as those who have had tradi-

tional education and often do somewhat better. But when we measure the broader results which progressive education tries especially to achieve—understanding, initiative, interest, co-operation, leadership, taking a responsible place in the community, and all-round development as human beings the products of progressive schools are, on the average, strikingly superior to those whose education has been traditional.'

Quite clearly, this book should be put into the hands of the unbelievers. Quite clearly, too, it should be read by parents. Parent-Teacher Associations might use it for discussion among their members to the enrichment through deeper understanding of parent-teacher-child relations.



Yes, *Schools Aren't What They Were* merits wide circulation. But I am worried by the chapter on 'Character, Morals, and Religion'. The author insists rightly on the need for 'social-mindedness', but seems to forget that, while, in the words of Aurelius, 'that which is not good for the bee-hive cannot be good for the bee', it does very often happen that what is good, at the time, for the individual child may not be good for the group, and that it is essential, for that child's growth, to permit the 'not-good' to happen. The problem that all of us who are actively concerned in progressive education have unceasingly to face is the difficulty, unique in each child, of satisfying his own inner drives and personal needs, and, at the same time, of meeting the demands made on him as a social being. Carleton Washburne treats this problem, I feel, too lightly.

So much valuable research on progressive education has been carried out in America that I am prompted to suggest yet another study. Could money be found for a follow-up of groups of leavers from progressive public schools and from traditional schools, say for seven years, of course with the necessary 'controls', to find out if there is any sustained difference in the quality of the individual as a result of the different type of education?

A. A. Bloom

### Fluent Writing and Speaking.

James Hemming. (Longmans. Stage A 1, 2, 3, 1/9 each; Stage B 1, 2, 3, 2/- each; Stage C 1, 2, 2/3 each); and

### They Can Be Fluent. Introductory notes for teachers free to Headteachers, extra copies 1/6 each.

The present day demand on all citizens for accurate use and understanding of written and spoken words is presenting the teacher with many problems. Tests are used to show up clearly the gaps and limitations of children's understanding and grasp of language. But these only emphasize the extent of the teacher's problem, the wide variation in his large class, and illustrate once again how careful teaching may still have failed to stimulate satisfactory learning in all pupils. Our attempts to give more attention to the needs of the developing personalities of our children, to provide opportunities in school for activities which have purpose to the children, make the old grammar exercises many of us endured seem out of place. There are far too many instances of the

failure of the old 'hammer-it-in' methods for us to accept these, and yet many teachers have difficulty in finding suitable material to meet these modern demands.

Here is a series of books which should prove a useful tool for the teacher in helping children to acquire the command of language we desire. The emphasis is put on the children's learning through experience with words, suggestions are made for their own use of words in connection with other interests and activities, for example by making entries in their 'own books'.

The series is designed 'to assure primary fluency for the less able child as well as providing the right sort of rehabilitation course for older children who have stopped advancing because they have become confused'. It provides opportunity for individual work as well as the stimulus of games with words and discussions in small groups. The course is in three stages, A, B and C, with three books, parallel in difficulty, at each of stages A and B and two at C, all including revision work.

An admirable little booklet *They can be Fluent* is written to give introductory notes for teachers on the use of the series. Here the main features are emphasized: the opportunity given for achievement, the attempt to combine vitality and self assurance in expression along with standards of accuracy, to recapitulate and revise, to interest children in words and encourage thought about them, and to grade the difficulty of work carefully so that the children may 'thrive on mastery.'

Most of the suggestions for the children given in the books seem well planned to cater for these developments, though those indicated for a large group or class may easily undo some of the confidence being built up at other times. Especially for those 'who have stopped advancing because they have become confused' it would seem most desirable to avoid competition with others in team games, or the possibility of comparison with other children more, or less, able (for example) to say a few words in an imaginary microphone, until confidence in using words has been gained beyond the stages considered here.

An ingenious 'verb-finder' is devised in the 'C' books, and exercises with it. Although these may prove useful for abler children, they may easily seem purposeless tasks to others. However, in the use of this device, as in the use of the books generally, the teacher will be able to find suitable material for the needs of his particular children and to relate the grammar to other aspects of word study, taken in the books.

The series is intended, along with

*A Book of Handy Words* and the *Ready Readers* to give a 'total fluency course'. *Fluent Writing and Speaking* should give security and graded adventures with words and make a sound contribution towards the literacy we want in all our citizens. The books would be particularly useful to teachers in upper junior and lower secondary modern classes.

M. Metcalfe Smith

### Better Schools Now! Peggy Jay (Turnstile Press. 3/6 paper, 7/6 cloth).

At a time when many partisan statements on education have served to bewilder parents and to irritate teachers rather than to help these partners in the educational field to do their job well, it is refreshing to have the clear, objective presentation of the case for educational improvement which Mrs. Jay gives in a ninety-two page pamphlet entitled *Better Schools Now!* Not all readers will agree with all her recommendations, but the merits of this pamphlet are outstanding. The language is simple yet vigorous; the arrangement logical; the effect heartening.

Describing the schools as they are, Mrs. Jay begins with pre-school and primary school, rural and urban, including the post-war primary school with its architectural advantages and light-weight furniture. In this chapter the emphasis is on material factors. Chapter Two, *They Do Nothing But Play*, describes accurately and reassuringly what goes on in a modern infants and junior school, with a clear appreciation of the different rôle of the teacher to-day from her rôle at the end of last century. Mrs. Jay is encouraging too about educational standards. 'Let us remember', she writes, 'if we are tempted to think of the past as the "good old days", that apart from its failure to contribute to the development of the child's character, the educational system also failed to achieve even its very limited aim. In 1890 only one-third of the children in London's schools reached beyond Standard III—which is about equivalent to a nine-year-old level of work to-day.'

Chapter Three, Four and Five describe secondary education in Grammar, Modern, Technical, and Comprehensive Schools. In regard to these last, Mrs. Jay points out that even the limited experience of Comprehensive Schools—mostly in unadvantageous accommodation—so far at our disposal, has shown that many more than 15 per cent. of the children in these schools wish to stay on beyond school leaving age. The importance of this is that the size of



Comprehensive Schools can be reduced far below the figure of 2,000 children originally envisaged by the L.C.C. without making the provision of grammar school courses uneconomic.

Part Two, *The Schools As They Might Be*, is practical and dynamic. Successive chapters give Mrs. Jay's opinion of how better buildings could be provided now, how smaller classes could be attained, and of the nature of the schools' task to-day.

In a final chapter, *The Parent's Part*, there is a convincing passage on the merits of parent-teacher co-operation; and a short but illuminating section on what parents can do at home and followed by an instructive passage on parents as citizens, with a plea that they should take a more active part on education and management committees and governing bodies. Practical as ever, Mrs. Jay explains how they may set about this new and absorbing task.

This is unquestionably a book for parents, for teachers and administrators and for the laymen on whom the authorization of their policy depends.

J. B. Annand

**Sigmund Freud Life and Work.**  
**Vol. 1. The Young Freud.**  
**1856-1900.** Ernest Jones, M.D.  
(Hogarth Press).

A famous naturalist who made an intensive survey of the small birds of Britain, ended his research with these words: 'In the face of these revelations of the power, energy, determination in the face of endless frustrations, and the devoted sacrifice for their families on the part of these frail creatures, we can only bow our heads in awe.' This is what we must feel in reading *The Young Freud*, the first authentic account of Freud and his development culminating in his revolutionary theory of the human mind.

The subject of the book, one of the great world geniuses, must give to this Biography unique interest; it is also remarkable in the telling. Dr. Ernest Jones, to-day the most skilled and understanding exponent of Freud's scientific theories, has always been noted for his gift of lucid explanation and his power to unravel complex subjects, and in this biography these capacities are more striking than ever. He creates a portrait which seems, like some of the most famous Dutch paintings, to step right outside its frame, to live and speak alongside us.

The task must have been colossal: every contact has been made: Freud's own family, his more distant relatives, his colleagues and superiors in work, his own records of work, his lectures,

his publications, references made to the medical and neurological work of other writers, his friends' praise and criticism. To give one example: during Freud's 4½ years' engagement (he was so poor, often close to starvation, that marriage was out of the question) to Marthe Bernays, he wrote her over 900 letters, and every one in his own handwriting . . . (almost to the time of his death Freud wrote his letters by hand, refusing a typewriter) . . . all these 900 letters have been read by Dr. Jones, with the aid of his wife, and used for reference.

The first section of the book entitled *Origins* gives us Freud's background as a child, from 1856-1869; the next, *Boyhood and Adolescence*, 1860-1873. Section III is concerned with *The Choice of Profession* and covers the years up to 1873. Chapters IV and V up to 1885 entitled *The Medical Student, His Medical Career*. Chapters VII and VIII, which take us to 1886, describe most important turning points in his life, his betrothal and marriage.

In Chapter X, which brings us to 1897, we are given the picture of the neurologist. In Chapter XI we read of his work and great friendship with Joseph Breuer, an association which ended in complete separation and hostile relations, and his association with Charcot, which Freud regarded

as one of the most important contacts of his life.

Then, in the period next dealt with, 1895-1899, Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* is dealt with. Of this Dr. Jones writes: '*The Interpretation of Dreams* is Freud's major work, the one by which his name will longest be remembered.

Investigation of dream life was carried out with such detailed thoroughness that the conclusions have undergone only a minimum of modification or addition in the half century since the book was published. Of very few important scientific works can this be said.

The last section of the volume, which takes us down to 1900 is entitled *Freud's Theory of the Mind*. The titles of these various sections give only an idea of the immense amount of material dealt with. Only those equipped with biological and neurological knowledge can follow the highly technical matter contained in some of the chapters; but for all of us who care about the strivings towards truth which so dominated Freud in this first portion of his career, reading the book is a most exciting experience.

The unusual background of Freud's early years helped to make of great importance, his extremely ambivalent attitude to his father, an ambivalence so often manifest in analytic investigation. Freud was the firstborn of his father's young second wife and he had stepbrothers both older and younger than himself. Freud was his young mother's favourite and her devotion to him probably developed in him his attitude of jealousy and envy on the one hand, his respect and admiration on the other towards his father. This double attitude Freud seems to have experienced again and again in later life. Dr. Jones expressed it as his (Freud's) need for a friend to whom he could give immense respect and trust, and an enemy against whom he could bring great hostility, sometimes both attitudes expressed against the same person at different stages. But through all the varying phases of Freud's life we watch this continued pursuit of knowledge developing in the often agonizing task of *self-analysis*.

Dr. Jones closes this volume as follows, after mentioning what a hard worker Freud was, how deeply engrossed in his work: 'That he was a close thinker will be manifest to any reader; but he had two far rarer qualities: a creative imagination that took him to the very confines of thought; and a superb courage which, combined with his absolute integrity, enabled him to conquer the phantoms which lurk in depths where no human being before had dared to venture.'

Barbara Low

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